

# COMICS BUYER'S GUIDE

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# 60 YEARS OF MARVEL!

#1353

October 22, 1999

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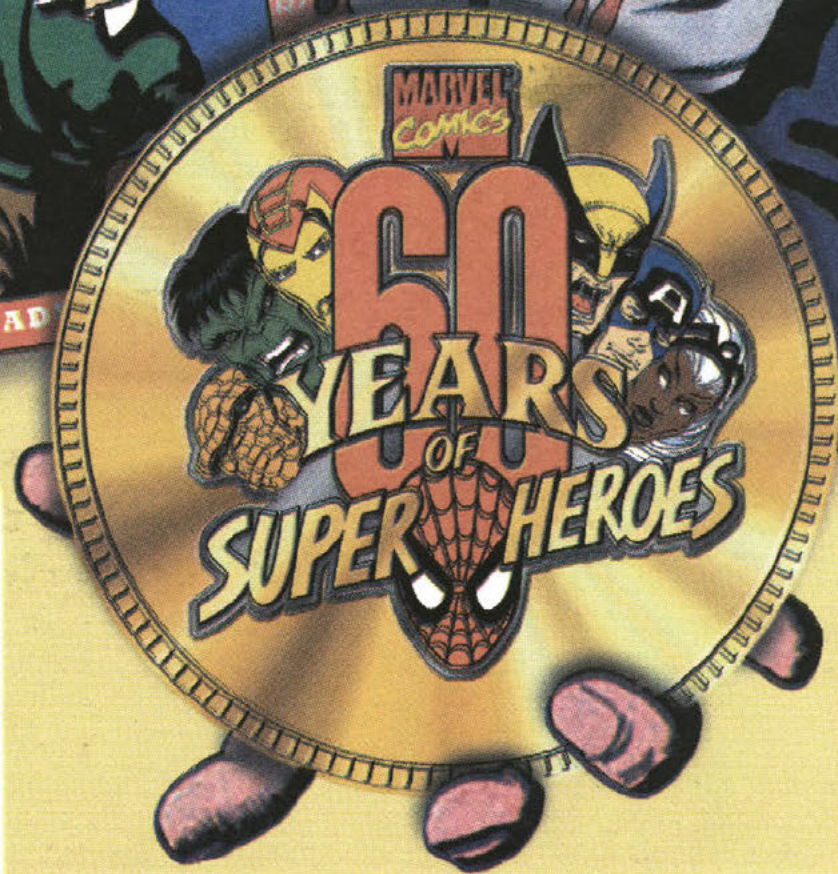
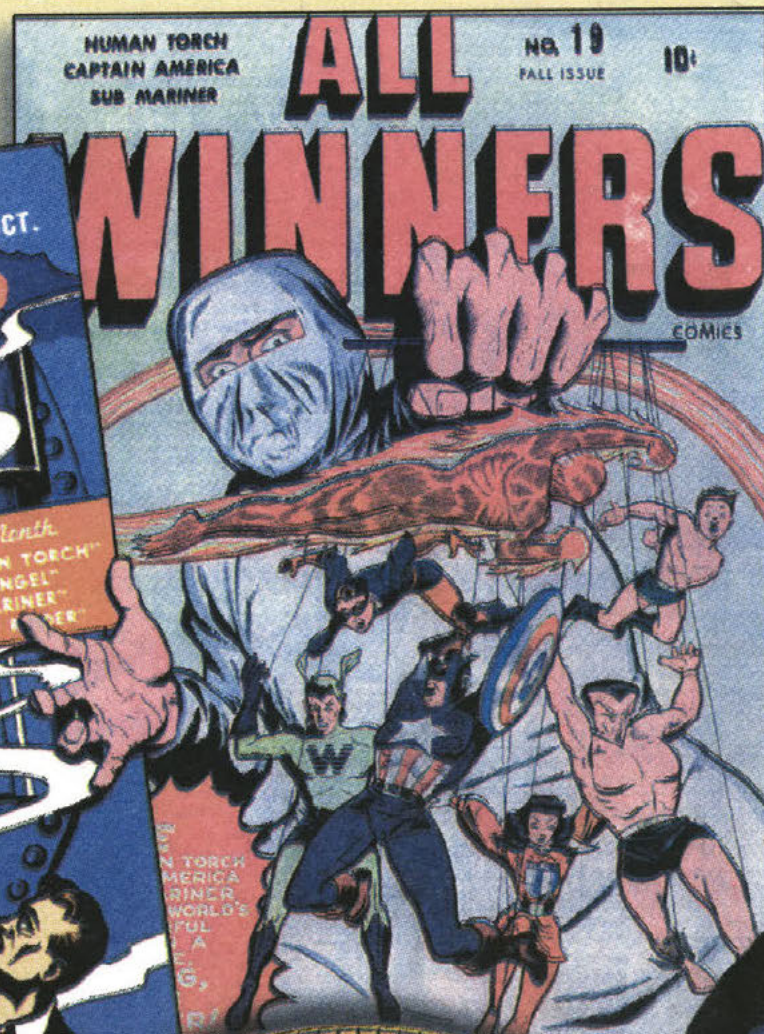
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Without a  
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What Did  
Archie Say?



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# COMICS BUYER'S GUIDE

## #1353

October 22, 1999

(Vol. 29, #43)

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## Adjust your schedules and your thinking

In last week's cover story, Kurt Busiek said there is never an excuse for having a late issue of a comic book. For several years, fans and retailers alike have complained about the lateness of favorite titles and said that creators need to get back on track and pay attention to readers' and retailers' needs.

These comments have become so common that fans almost expect a successful series to fail to meet deadlines — and the perception is that this industry delay is something new. Yet, if you read Mark Evanier's columns about Silver Age and Golden Age artists and writers, you'll see some of them also had trouble meeting deadlines.

Part of the problem today is that we've been trained to expect new comics on Wednesday. If comics we're expecting that day don't arrive, we let the retailer know how disappointed we are. In our area, there is only one local comics shop. (Well, it's 25 miles away, but it's as local as we get.) More than a year ago, the owner declared Thursday to be new comics day, and everyone adjusted.

Years ago, before the direct market, fans could count on newsstand distributors dropping off new comics on Tuesdays and/or Thursdays in most areas. The newsstand distributor a store used would determine what comics came in. Of course, the system wasn't as cut-and-dried as the direct market is today, and store owners couldn't pick and choose which comics (or even how many) they ordered. And fans couldn't count on the next issue of a given series



Editorial  
by  
**Brent  
Frankenhoff**

even showing up at their neighborhood store.

But, you say, that's yesterday. How about solving the current problem? Here's a radical thought: *Find something else to read the week you're expecting the current issue of your favorite title and it doesn't show up.*

This could work for both readers and retailers.

Retailers, find a series with a theme similar to the super-popular one and recommend that to the disappointed reader. You might pick up a reader of that alternative and keep him or her as a customer for the late series.

Readers, don't go into the store with blinders on, targeting no more than your one favorite title. Be open to new series. And, when your favorite finally *does* ship, consider it a treat to be savored. There are plenty of independent series that only produce an issue a year, yet you don't complain about those being "late."

This doesn't mean creators whose series are solicited on a monthly basis should get off the hook. A number of retailers (and

Kurt) have said, "If you can't make the schedule, don't solicit the product."

That point has merit for several reasons:

- Solicitations are sent to the distributors more than three months before the actual comic book is due. If the issue is ready to go before a publisher sends in the solicitation copy, a much more detailed listing can appear. That lets both retailers and readers make a more informed decision about what's coming.

- By being ahead, creators will be set, when that emergency (and there's always one) crops up.

- Rather than printing "just in time," publishers can sometimes get a discount from the printer for having product on hand to print when there's an available opening in the schedule — and then the finished comics are ready to go into the pipeline with plenty of time to spare.

The most important thing to remember about our hobby, as I wrote in my last editorial, is to have fun.

Who wants to pound out an issue that's already late? That just makes the creators drag their feet even more with the attitude of "another day won't hurt." It's got to feel good to be ahead.

Retailers and readers should provide creators with ongoing enthusiasm about the next installment. Let's get more of that "What happens next?" spirit, instead of the "Where the heck is it?" attitude that's been prevalent the past couple of years.

With Halloween coming, it's time to emphasize treats, not tricks.

## This week in

COMICS  
BUYER'S  
GUIDE

### On the cover

Beginning in October 1939 with the appropriately named *Marvel Comics* #1, Marvel (then Timely) has been turning out all sorts of comic books in nearly every genre. In October the company is celebrating its 60 years in business with two Golden Age reprints, several Silver Age collections, and even some new series that look at the company's rich history.

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**News Includes:** Chris Claremont returns to the main X-titles in March; Melissa Joan Hart is in trouble with Archie; J. Michael Straczynski is pleased with *Rising Stars* performance; *Oni Double Feature* is canceled; Dan Jurgens gives a *Tomb Raider* preview; animated *Avengers* is delayed; Wonder Woman becomes a one-person JLA next year; AC celebrates 30 years in December; and DC has a *Dark Victory* ..... **6 and elsewhere**

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## Get reviewed!

Items for *Comics Guide* should be sent to Editor Maggie Thompson.

Items for *Faraway Looks* should be sent to Managing Editor John Jackson Miller.

For the *Anime/Manga Shelf*, send items to Associate Editor Joyce Greenholdt.

To participate in *Comics in Your Future*, contact Projects Editor Brent Frankenhoff for an invitation. Items received for this column without an invitation will not be considered.

Trade paperbacks for the *Comics Bookshelf* can be sent to Mike Keeney, Comic Corner, 2806-A S. Memorial Pkwy., Huntsville, AL 35801.

**Please note:** Due to the volume of material received, no review can be guaranteed.



OCTOBER ISSUE  
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## PREVIEWS



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October: the trees are beautiful, the weather is starting to get cooler, Halloween and all its wonderful spookiness is in the air...and of course *Previews* is right here to let you in on the best comics around for the beginning of the Fall season! On the front cover: The **Justice League of America** has to face its evil counterparts from a parallel world in DC's **JLA: Earth 2 HC!** Around back: Image Comics presents an amazing montage of images from their new indy titles!

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- Go to Hell and back with Image Comics' **Spawn Bible III!**
- **Wicked Ways!** Image Comics presents a killer new series—**The Wicked #1!**
- Marvel pulls out all the stops as the **Heroes Reborn Universe** quakes with the power of **Dr. Doom!**
- **Wizard #100** is here with a new issue of the magazine you love, including all of its regular features and much more!

## COMICS

Don't be a stranger! **Abstract Studio's Strangers in Paradise #29** starts a new storyline. Plus: **SIP paper dolls** on the back cover!

Also:

- End the Millennium with the first-ever 2,000-page comic book, **Comix 2000** by Fantagraphics.
- The heroes of the baseball diamond are now the newest heroes of the comic book world, thanks to **Ultimate Sports** new titles: **Cosmic Slam**, **Fastball Express**, **Shortstop Squad**, and **Super Sluggers**.
- Gotta catch 'em all, including the first **Pokémon** movie adaptation—**Viz's Pokémon Movie Adaptation Mewtwo Strikes Back #1!**

## MAGAZINES

It's the last episode of **Hercules**, so you better get in on the excitement with **Xena and Hercules** in **Titan's Xena Magazine Featuring Hercules #4**, available in a **Previews Exclusive Cover Edition!**

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## FEATURES

**Terry Moore** talks about **Strangers in Paradise** and the series' new direction in an exclusive **interview!**

Also:

- **Interview with the Vampire...Writer!** **Anne Rice** tells all in a special **Previews** interview on her new comic series, **The Vampire Lestat!**



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# Claremont returns to *Uncanny* and *X-Men*

By Matt Brady and Michael Doran

Confirming reports from sources who asked to remain unnamed, Marvel recently announced that Chris Claremont will return to writing both *Uncanny X-Men* and *The X-Men* in March 2000.

The return will mark Claremont's first return to the regular writing of the titles since his departure from *X-Men* in 1991.

While Claremont declined interview requests, Marvel did issue a press release quoting Marvel Publisher Winston Fowlkes as saying, "We welcome Chris back and are thrilled for him to pick up his pen again to script the *X-Men* titles — comics that he was so instrumental in defining. He has a talent for superior writing and displays an insurmountable strength when dealing with the intricacies of multi-character plots."



Claremont

The release also quoted Claremont's only statement to date regarding his return: "It is a challenge returning to a series with which I have always been so closely associated. Yet, at the same time, it's a real treat to revisit the lives of so many old and dear friends. I always said I had a lot of stories yet to tell about the *X-Men*; now I've got the chance to do that."

Claremont's first issue of *X-Men* will be #100, while his first issue of *Uncanny X-Men* will be #380. It is unclear if he will continue to write *Fantastic Four* while he writes the *X*-titles. No art teams have been named for either *Uncanny* or *X-Men*, leaving uncertain the future of current *Un-*

*canny* and *X-Men* penciller and plotter Alan Davis.

**Just the beginning.** The return of Claremont in March marks what appear to be sweeping changes to creative teams throughout the *X*-universe. Other *X*-titles facing creative changes in early 2000 include the "second tier": *X-Man*, *Generation X*, *X-Force*, and *Cable*.

According to the aforementioned unnamed sources, the majority of all four series' creative teams have been let go, and current *Cable* penciller Rob Liefeld is slated to expand his creative involvement in the named series.

Negotiations are rumored to be underway between Marvel and Liefeld to make him a "head plotter and consultant" to what would become a small family of titles — *Generation X*, *X-Man*, and *X-Force* — as *Cable* is ru-

mored to return to the core *X*-titles, perhaps due to his possible addition to the lineup of *Uncanny X-Men*.

In addition to plotting and penciling one of the three titles and working with series' Editor Jason Liebig to springboard ideas and overall plots for other writers to execute, Liefeld would also work with Liebig and provide input on all phases of the comics' production, including the selection of art teams.

One rumored result of the deal would be the return of artist Ian Churchill to Marvel as penciller for one title.

When asked to comment on the story, Liefeld replied, "I direct you to Marvel in regards to anything regarding the *X*-office and can offer no comments at this time." Similarly, Liebig declined to comment but did not deny the reports.

## Sabrina actress under fire for interviews

By Joyce Greenholdt

Archie Comics Publisher Michael Silberkleit has demanded that actress Melissa Joan Hart either apologize for comments published in a men's magazine or leave her starring role in *Sabrina, the Teenage Witch*, according to a report in the Sept. 29 *New York Post*.

A scantily clad Hart posed for the cover and an interior photo spread in the October issue of *Maxim*. Cover copy on the issue includes the line: "Sabrina: Your favorite witch without a stitch!" The accompanying interview included comments by the 23-year-old on sex and a description of a *Sabrina* drinking game.

According to the *Post*'s report, Silberkleit sent a letter to Sumner Redstone, the chairman of Viacom, which licensed the rights for the show from Archie, saying that Hart's comments have damaged the wholesome image of

the *Sabrina* character. Silberkleit said this violates the *Sabrina* licensing contract.

"She can say whatever she wants as Melissa but she can't say it as a representative of my trademarks," Silberkleit said in the *Post* article.

**Additional demands.** In a separate letter faxed to Viacom, an Archie Comics attorney demanded that Viacom "immediately terminate Melissa Joan Hart's and [Sabrina Executive Producer] Paula Hart's involvement with the *Sabrina* trademark and property," unless Melissa makes a public statement calling the articles in *Maxim* and *Bikini*, another men's magazine, "a poor exercise in judgment," agrees not to do anything similar in the future, and "agrees to voluntarily participate in an anti-drinking campaign."

The mother-daughter team of Paula and Melissa Hart stand to lose a great deal, if Archie is able to dictate their removal from any licensed *Sabrina* project.

According to the cover story in the Oct. 2-8 *TV Guide*, the ABC series has hit the top of the ratings among prime-time shows among 2- to 11-year-old viewers. The Harts are partners in Hartbreak Films, which produces both the live-action series and the animated Saturday-morning *Sabrina* spin-off series (which features the voice of Melissa's 13-year-old sister, Emily).

Follow-up reports in *The Post* said that Viacom had no comment and that Hart refused to make a public apology "at this time," preferring instead to discuss matters privately with Archie representatives.

An Oct. 1 story said that Archie had yet to hear from Hart.



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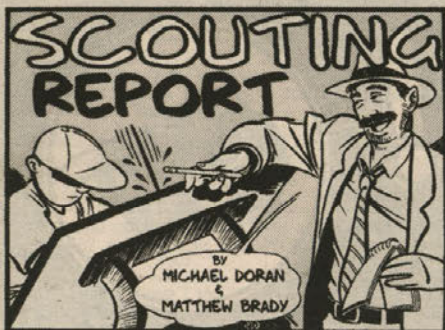
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**JMS on *Rising Stars*.** *Babylon 5* and *Rising Stars* creator **J. Michael Straczynski** reported that he's very happy with the response to his Top Cow series, whose first issue made its debut at the #3 spot on Diamond's

Top 100 list.

"It's a wonderful kind of reward and validation for what we were attempting to do," Straczynski said. "It's a series based strongly on character and certain literary elements more used in novels and in *Babylon 5*. I've found the comics-oriented press to be remarkably friendly and encouraging of new things and the series, whereas in television there's more of a tendency to dump on these things. It's been quite remarkable and wonderful from this side of things."

According to Straczynski, Top Cow

may release a *Rising Stars* trade paperback soon, collecting the early issues. As for the ongoing series, Straczynski said the various elements seen in *Rising Stars* will slowly start to come together. "The first issue introduced us to the universe we're in, #2 sets up more details about the murders that are going on, #3 gives us the story of firefighter Lee Jackson and the likely 'motive' for the murders, and #4 introduces about 11 characters to give us some possible suspects for those murders."

"It's very clean and linear that way, each issue building upon the one preceding it — and you definitely get a sense that the series is going somewhere, that it's not just random fights and stuff."



**Oni Double Feature to end.** According to a post on the Oni message boards by Oni Editor **Jamie Rich**, *Oni Double Feature*, Oni's anthology series that has seen contributions by the likes of **Kevin Smith**, **Neil**

**Gaiman**, and **Paul Dini**, will end with #13. "The reasons are many," Rich said. "Beyond continually trying to find great material, we found we couldn't gather a substantial enough readership that would pick it up regardless of what was in the issue, which is historically a plague on all anthologies. This means you practically have to remarket the se-

ries every month — and this is a strain on energy and money. We will be going out with a bang, however, with four strips by Paul Dini, drawn by **Barry Caldwell**, **Stephen DeStefano**, **Tom Fowler**, and a farewell strip by Paul and **Chynna Clugston-Major**."

**Jurgens talks *Tomb Raider*.** One of the main features new *Tomb Raider* writer **Dan Jurgens** said he is looking forward to is being able to fill in the blanks for Lara Croft, one of popular culture's icons of the '90s. "I don't have a set of guidelines or a 'bible' for the character," Jurgens said of the series, which begins in November.

"So far, I haven't been told 'no' on anything. Top Cow and [Tomb Raider videogame producer] Eidios have a terrific working relationship, which obviously makes my tenure on the series that much easier."

According to Jurgens, his take on Lara will look at her motivations for globe-trotting and tomb raiding. "Lara has everything she wants on a material level but she doesn't have everything she wants in life on an emotional level," Jurgens said.

"That's why she goes off on these adventures and that's what keeps her sharp every day."

"In the very first couple of issues I'll work to define her character as well as ask a lot of questions about her past — and try to get a level of intrigue going

on a couple of different levels. Her 'raiding' is going to start off with a quest for something called the Medusa Mask, an ancient mask which infuses the wearer with great power. Lara is after it but she's not the only one after it, and it becomes something of a race. And, of course, there are some mysterious-type people who want her to get it and others who don't want her to get it. What would *Tomb Raider* be without the bad guys?"

### Animated *Avengers* delayed

By Rob Allstetter

Fox Kids has delayed the premiere of *The Avengers* animated series. Originally scheduled to begin Sept. 25, the show did not have a new launch date at presstime, but was expected to begin in October or November.

Sources told **CBG** the delay was because of production reasons, which are common in animation.

"The show to date looks great," said Fox Kids Vice President and Head of Programming Roland Poindexter. "With so many new series on the schedule we'd like to be able to highlight *The Avengers* and give it the attention it deserves as one of our more prominent properties on Saturday morning. By delaying its premiere date, we'll be able to do just that."

Until *The Avengers* premieres, *Digimon* will air in its 10:30 a.m. (ET) time slot on Saturdays.

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## Wonder Woman becomes one-person JLA

By Rob Allstetter

Writer-painter Chris Moeller is taking his first shot at the mainstream DC universe with *JLA: Wonder Woman — A League of One*, a 96-page painted hardcover book slated for late next year.

"It's set in continuity, so it's not like an Elseworlds thing," Moeller said. "The basic premise is that there's a dragon that was the last of the dragons and was driven underground during the Middle Ages.



It was wounded but not killed and it's been sleeping under the mountains in Switzerland ever since.

"It gets awakened and Wonder Woman hears a prophecy. The gods tell her that The Justice League is going to fight it and they're all going to be killed. She has to decide what to do, and the story goes from there. Her choice revolves around neutralizing the rest of The Justice League and taking on the dragon herself."

Originally, Moeller had planned for the story to focus solely on Wonder Woman. "The JLA angle kind of just worked as we were working through story ideas," he said. "Her identity as a member of The Justice League was an interesting aspect of her persona, as opposed to just her. I really like her in the mix with The JLA.

"Her relationship with Batman and her relationship with Superman brought a lot to the story that made it stronger than if she were just on her own."

Moeller said he's taking a different approach than the one he used for his *Helix* project *Sheva*.

"This one I'm going for high fantasy, as opposed to a science-fiction feel," he said, adding that he's a longtime fan of Wonder Woman, dating back to the Lynda Carter television series. "Everybody's done Batman; Superman's been done a lot recently; but nobody's done a big, painted Wonder Woman book. I love Wonder Woman and I'm having a blast."

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## AC Comics celebrates 30 years of independence

When AC Comics' Bill Black first started producing independent comics, Richard Nixon was in the White House, the Vietnam War was at its height, and no one had begun a direct-sales market for comics, although underground comix had begun to establish distribution chains. That was 30 years ago, when Bill began his Paragon Publications line. Three decades later, he's still going strong, and December marks a celebration of that anniversary, as AC rereleases a rare issue that bridged the gap between Paragon and AC — *Fun Comics* #1. (By #4, *Fun Comics* had gone to full color and was the first comic book to bear the AC Comics logo and slug.)

Originally printed in 1980, it has remained out of print for almost two decades. "When I created *Fun Comics*, I wanted to present the kind of comics that I always thought were fun to read," said Black in an editorial from that era. The explosion of the direct market in the early '80s caused him to shift his focus almost exclusively to contemporary super-hero comics with the evolution of his AC Comics line. But additional market permutations have brought the AC-Paragon line almost full circle, and the features in *Fun* #1 play out almost as a template for the diversity of the AC-Paragon line-up in the '90s.

Traditional costumed adventure is given reign in "Commando D," written and drawn by Black in an homage to the Captain 3-D character that inspired his creation. "Good Girl Art" action with a touch of the macabre is present in "Love/Death," the first contemporary-style appearance of the heroine who would become Nightveil of AC's long-running *Femforce* female super-group series. Straight-ahead super-heroes with an over-the-top flavor abound in "Crime Cruise," a Black-written and drawn "Atom" story. The Golden Age reprint and Western genres are covered with "Play of Death," which reprints a Dick Ayers "Haunted Horseman" story from Magazine Enterprises, and comics history is a part of the mix with a short text piece "Introducing The Men behind the Boy's Ranch," a Simon and Kirby retrospective.

This 30th anniversary second printing will have a full-color cover, as opposed to the original's black and white. It contains 36 pages and retails for \$4.95. An extra anniversary bonus will be a variant edition of AC-Paragon's historical reprint title *Golden-Age Men of Mystery*. In addition to the standard 52-page, black-and-white version of *Golden-Age Men of Mystery in Space* #19, there will be a limited run of *Golden-Age Men of Mystery Color Giant Supersonic Special Edition*. This will contain 16 additional pages in color, expanding on the issue's theme of outer space and science fiction in color stories by Wally Wood and Joe Orlando, Al Williamson with Frank Frazetta and Roy Krenkel, and George Evans. The standard format will retail for the usual \$6.95, while the color edition (limited to 700 copies) will be priced at \$10.95.

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DestinyCon '99 kicks off with an event-filled evening at the Rialto Theatre in Tacoma, Washington on Saturday, November 6th at 7:00pm.

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**Dennis Yee**

418 Camelback Rd.

Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

Summer has ended. All the signs are there. It's getting dark sooner, school has started, and, for the most part, comics conventions have ended.

Yesterday, I took my son, at his insistence, to the Pokémon Tour at the local shopping mall. I was struck at how similar it was to smaller comics shows I've been to. Everywhere, there were Pokémon fanatics, most age 13 and below.

I've asked my son a few times, if he'd like to attend some of the comics shows I've gone to. While he has a few comics and he occasionally leafs through my paperback collection of Silver Age reprints, he always replies with a, "No, thank you." The only comic books he's interested in are the Pokémon manga — and, even then, only peripherally. He'd much rather trade the cards, watch the cartoon show, or play the Game Boy version.

Which got me to thinking about mainstream comics' appeal (or lack thereof) to the next generation. There are card games and trading cards with our mainstream super-heroes. There are videogames featuring the super-heroes we grew up with. There are excellent animated versions of Batman and Superman. Super-heroes are in other media and are readily available to kids of that age.

If my son is any indication, these su-

per-heroes have lost their appeal. Oh, he likes *Batman Beyond* and will watch it, but he and his friends don't go around pretending to be Batman or Superman. They pretend to be Ash Ketchum.

Comics seem to be caught in a vicious circle. As kids buy comics less and less, publishers survive by tailoring their product to older reader. I'm all for a greater diversity of comics, and an older audience has spurred the creation of this. Unfortunately, public perception of comics still relegates it to a younger, less mature (mentally as well as chronologically) audience.

So comics targeted for older readers are either ignored or considered inappropriate, no matter what the age of the reader.

This leaves the publisher producing products for a narrower and narrower audience. Look at the price of comics. What parent will pay \$2 and up for a comic book? Look at the females with basketballs for bosoms, fighting crime in lingerie. Look at our heroes and anti-heroes packing bigger and bigger guns, the better to solve society's problems with. Look at what happened to comics featuring Disney characters. We are losing (or have lost) the base audience with which to continue comics as a mass-media product.

So 30 years from now, my son will be going to Pokémon conventions, trying to recapture memories of his childhood (or he'll be online, since we'll probably have

virtual conventions by then). And comics will only survive as a product for a very small niche. I can envision someday my grandchild will wonder what his Dad saw in Pokémon. That grandchild will pick up a comic book and ask what it is. My son will say, "It's something your grandfather used to be crazy about."

[Or, just as likely, he'll say, "This is neat stuff (pick your 21st-century synonym for "neat stuff") from the 1990s! You know that great story you liked seeing so much? This is the original!"

As to paying \$2 and up for a comic book, Pokémon cards are sold in 60-card two-player starter decks for \$8.99 each — and parents are paying that. There are 60-card preconstructed decks for \$9.99. There are booster packs for \$2.79-\$2.99. The current Viz comic-book series runs \$2.95, except for #1, which is \$3.50 — still in that same ballpark. The squarebound *Pokémon Adventures* paperbacks from Viz are \$5.95, still less than the starter decks.

My kids were surrounded by comics as they grew up and love particular creators and storylines — but are not into comics as collectors. Of course, they've never had to be.]

**Kim R. Haney**

5332 Vandenberg St.

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May 3, 1999, the worst tornado(es) in memory (if not history) tore through  
(Continues on Page 16)

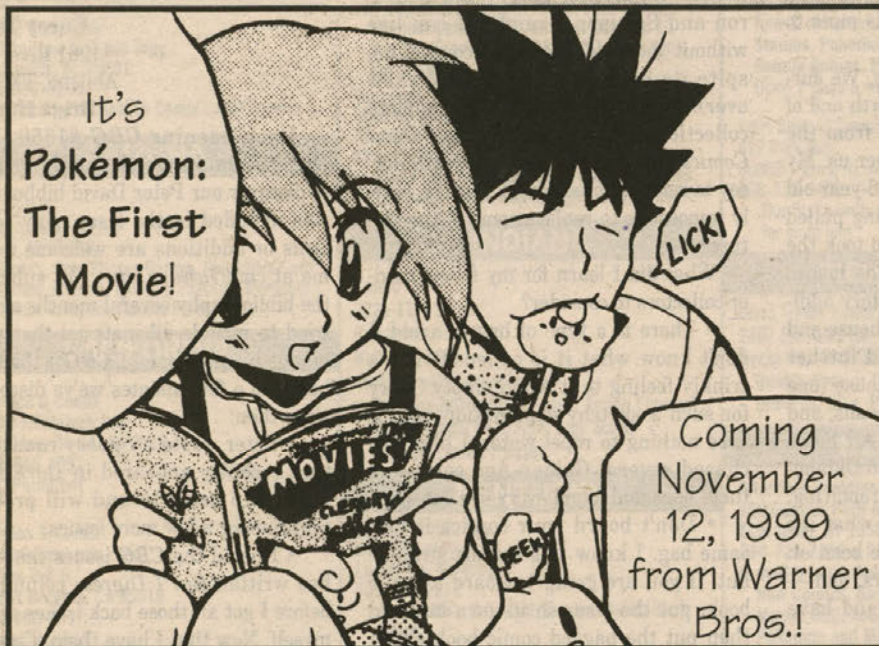
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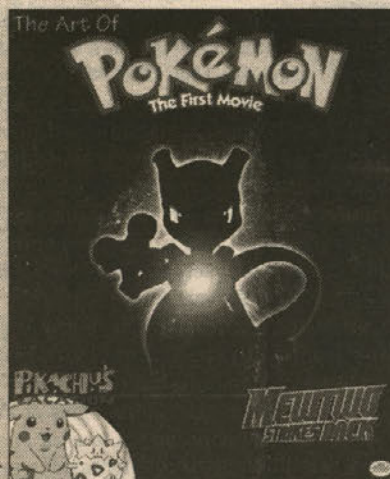
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ing list, where we have fun discussing anything and everything that Peter (aka PAD) writes.

**Chris Juricich**  
1808 Chestnut St.  
Berkeley, CA 94702

Reading the coverage of Peter David in #1350 caused me to reflect on a time I met Peter David — the only time I've ever had such an opportunity. At the time I was the sales manager for Viz Comics and attended the San Diego Con along about 1990 or so. It was late in the afternoon, I was alone at the booth, and a fellow whom I took for a fan entered the booth and engaged me in conversation, seeming very knowledgeable about manga, as I recall, tossing opinion and esoterica about comics and what-not throughout his time with me.

I noticed his badge had two first names on it, thinking how sad a situation that must be for anyone to have to endure. Of course, the fellow in question was Peter David, and, as Maggie would come to appreciate as have I, the fellow certainly buckled his bootstraps on and lifted himself up into becoming the successful writer we all know today. I'm not sure at which career stage he was at this point in 1990, but one thing I can say: Even at that early time he'd already managed to master the art of digression!

[Well, actually, he'd been writing comics professionally for some time at that point and had worked in Marvel's Direct-Market Department. He'd had stories in *Action Comics*, *Amazing Spider-Man*, and *Dreadstar*, for example, and had already begun his run on *Hulk*. For that matter, his column for *CBG* had begun by about the time you met him.]

**Irving L. Jacobs**  
3542 Nile St.  
San Diego CA 92101

Enclosed is the last daily *Rip Kirby* strip. Younger readers may be unfamiliar with the strip: Alex Raymond began it in 1946, and John Prentice continued the strip from 1957 until his recent death. Jay Kennedy of King Features Syndicate wrote me that the strip was no longer profitable for the syndicate. So ends a classic strip — and hardly anyone notices.

While it seems unlikely to occur, a publisher could publish a monthly series of reprints for many years without running out of material. Or, even better, there could be the *New Adventures of Rip Kirby* in color. So much for wishful thinking! In recent years we've lost *Brick Bradford*, *Secret Agent Corrigan*, the daily *Flash Gordon*, *Terry, Steve Canyon*, and now *Rip*.

There seems to be a consensus that continuity strips are dying. That's evidently true, but it does occur to me that, with no storyline comic strips in newspapers to attract new readers, the next generation will have to make a giant leap from the 10-second perusal of *Marmaduke* or *Garfield* to the acquired habit of purchasing comic books and/or graphic novels. There certainly will be no smooth and easy transition, as there was for those of us during the Golden Age or Silver Age.

**Bob Schreib Jr.**  
44 Georgetown Dr.  
Toms River, NJ 08757

You made a great review of *The Punisher's* 25 years in comics. However, a point you *didn't* make is that at least one of the underlying reasons why this character has so much staying power is that he's a political reflection of American society's regard of organized crime. The thing is, many people think that his political agenda of simply doing street justice on organized crime figures is exactly what this country needs: They share his insane conviction but lack his insane courage.

The Punisher's longstanding popularity is a kind of socio-media recoil of the public's disgust at our justice system's failure to quell the chronic miseries and murders caused by criminal networking. A "Kill them all and let God sort them out!" perspective was an inevitability.

Incidentally, there were a few real-life cases of madmen trying to kill upper-echelon crime figures, but they never survived the bodyguards and were "disappeared." A fallacy of the comics is that they never fully depicted just *how* extensive the security field around the higher crime figures is. It rivals that of the President.

I suspect that sales of *The Punisher's* comics rise whenever there's some new atrocity committed by organized crime and publicized in the media — and then proportionately drops when the media focus elsewhere. Since the Justice Department recently broke the back of the old-time mobs through new laws allowing extensive wiretapping, witness protection, etc., sales will be relatively low. Now that international mobs doing drug-running are networking with local gangs to create new problems, that will inspire new comics storylines of wild vigilantes.

If you want sales to go through the roof, make a storyline in which *The Punisher* decides to eliminate all mob lawyers as the most expedient way of eliminating organized crime. That approach might make him completely popular with the public, since it is only by soulless compliance of megabuck attorneys that pure evil like that can prosper in American society. All the rest of the law-abiding citizens are sick to death of them: They hate the mobsters but they hate the people who suck up to them worse, and that sentiment can produce new interest in this comic-book character.

**Jim Drew**

How would *The Sphinx* have put it? "A set of colorful dolls should include dolls of color."

I find it unfortunate that the *Playing Mantis* set of *Mystery Men* figures will exclude the two characters from the film who weren't Caucasian. (I note that they and *The Spleen* are also the only ones with genuine super-powers.)

(Hmm. In light of the recent spate of "conservatism" letters, does my opinion on this simply show my "liberal bias"? I wouldn't be buying the dolls, regardless of which characters were or were not included; does that lessen the value of my opinion? Does my admission of that improve the opinion's status?)

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Oh, So?

From  
Page  
16

[JMM: I would assume toy manufacturers are familiar with all sorts of market forces, fair and otherwise, that influence demand for figures but I don't know if this was motivated by one of them.]

I racked my brain trying to remember any kids in 1980 who didn't want the Lando Calrissian figure, but I don't recall any. (Lando was, after all, way cool.) Rather, what those mostly young white male buyers didn't want were the Princess Leias. She had a wimpy gun and, well, she was a chick. With all the "bad girl" action figures today, that's a preference that has largely reversed (and you'll notice most of today's female figures have *really* big guns). But I can't really say Kenner went out of its way to avoid making figures of female characters, when Lucas failed to provide such characters in the first place. Four movies, and I can think of only five or six with names ...]

**Ken Barnes**

CBLDF Member

136 Confair Pkwy.

Montoursville, PA 17754

In response to comments by "Marvin Gardens" in *CBG* #1350, I never realized that censorship was responsible for all of the creative stories that we enjoy in comics and other media today. I don't know how I missed that one. I thought that it was aesthetic storytelling, rich character development, and the writer's liberal imagination. Here all the time it was censorship!

When you say that Wal-Mart and Waldenbooks peddle offensive literature such as Winnie the Pooh and Alice in Wonderland to children not old enough to read comic books, you are confounding the issue entirely. You make it sound as if these stores are somehow sneaking this material into your house and onto your children's bookshelves. (See, I'm using my imagination here.) How about taking some responsibility for what your children read, instead of blaming a bookstore for what it sells? You sound exactly like an AFA member quoting from one of its targeted and misguided newsletters.

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**Delmo Walters Jr.**939 Woodycrest Ave., #416  
Bronx, NY 10452

Did anyone notice that *Peter Parker, Spider-Man* #10 didn't have the Comics Code seal on the cover? This was pointed out to me by Jeff Plackemeir. He theorized, and I agree, that it was left off because Code evaluators didn't approve of Venom "eating" the Carnage symbiote. If that's the reason, why did they approve *Hulk* #8, where Wolverine jams his claws into the Hulk's eyes, especially taking into considering the whole "injury



to eye" thing that led to the Code's creation in the '50s?

Also, at the end of *PSPM* #10, JJJ was about to unmask Spider-Man. When *PSPM* #11 opens, we see Spider-Man swinging with MJ in tow (a direct continuation from *ASM* #11) with no mention of or reference to the JJJ incident. Did I, or Marvel, miss something?

Also, a friend of mine sent me a photo with this as the backdrop. The Superman figure is definitely by Alex Ross. Who did the Batman figure? I don't think he did it, because the head looks wrong. Can anyone tell me a) who painted it? and b) where was this backdrop at San Diego?

**Jeff Alan Polier**

9100 SW Monterey Pl.

Portland, OR 97225

It seems as though the rumor of Peter and Mary Jane splitting has been going on for years. I think it's a terrible idea. My opinion may not count, though. After all, the only Spider-title I read is *Spider-Girl*.

True, the Parkers are still together there, but The Powers That Be at Marvel probably don't see that as having anything to do with the "current" titles. This much I can assure them: Having MJ and Peter divorce is not a good method to entice me to start buying *Amazing Spider-Man* and *Peter Parker, Spider-Man*. Kudos to Ivan A. Martin for such a well-written letter on his (and, coincidentally, my own) position on the topic.

I was one of the people who voted against Fred Hembeck being killed. The sad thing is that I enjoyed his columns from his time as a ghost more than those since his return. Maybe he can hold a seance and interview more dead people. Just a thought. (And isn't it a visit from Brother Voodoo overdue?)

So *Jay & Silent Bob* #4 is supposedly being released this week. I'll believe it when I see it. Or, to be more accurate, when my wife sees it. She's the one buying the series. I freely admit that I prefer super-hero comics over other genres. Jennifer's a bit more experimental. It's just nice when something she orders actually ships.

**Gene Popa**

6727 Ridgeland Ave.

Hammond, IN 46324

Regarding Nelson Jimenez' letter in #1349 regarding Native American heroes in comics and his question as to whether anyone could recall any he had not listed, I could think of a half-dozen or so potential additions.

I'm sure technically they don't count, but spiritually one could include both (the original) Bullseye and Clay Duncan. Each of these Simon and Kirby Western heroes were Caucasian, but they had been raised by Indians, and their sympathies generally remained with the natives.

Remaining in the old west, we also have Brian Savage, the Scalphunter. He had an enjoyable series from DC in the '70s, and he's recently been introduced as a backstory character in *Starman*.

Over at Marvel, there is Alpha Flight's Shaman and his super-heroine daughter (whose name I can't recall at the moment.) And finally, in the early 1980s, Marvel introduced The American Eagle in the pages of *Marvel Two-in-One*. Despite a significant buildup for his debut, I don't believe that he has reappeared since. I'm sure I'm missing many others, but it's late, and I'm going to bed.

[JMM: Shaman's daughter was *Talisman*.]





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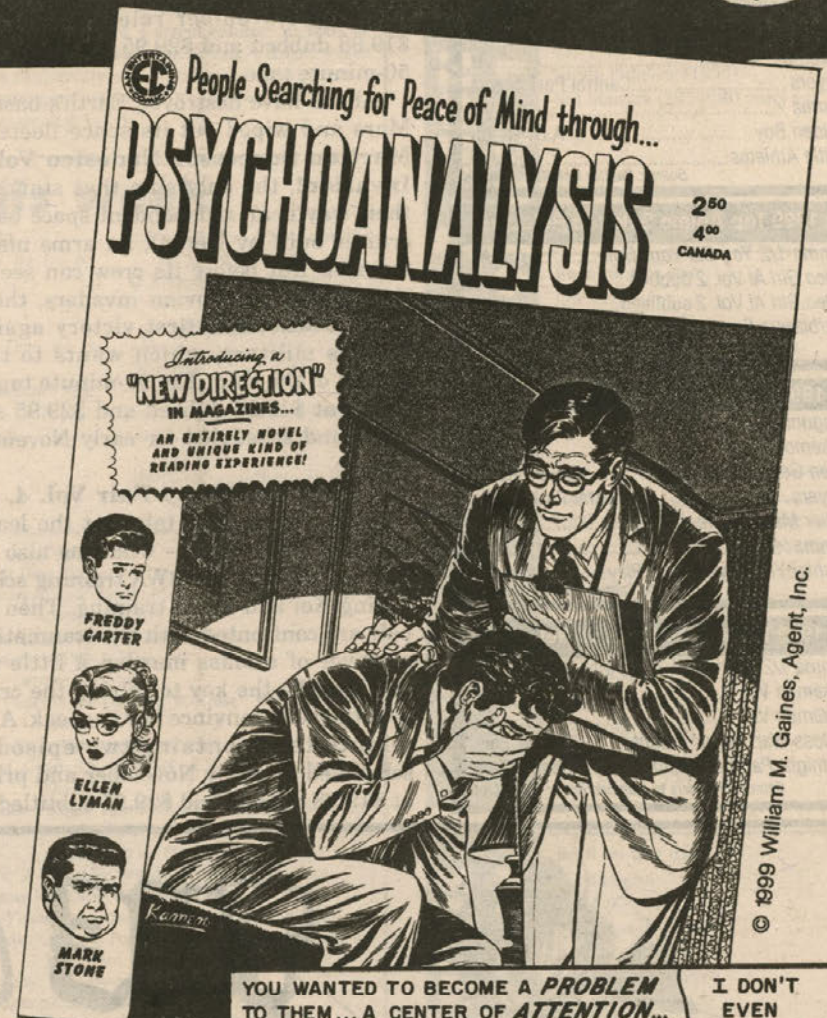


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- 6 Golden Boy.....A.D. Vision
- 7 Battle Athletes.....Pioneer

Source: Comics Retailer Magazine

## June 1999 Top Anime Sales to Retailers

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- 4 Slayers.....Central Park Media
- 5 Saber Marionette J.....Bandai
- 6 Ranma ½.....Viz
- 7 Fushigi Yugi/Mysterious Play.....Pioneer

Source: Comics Retailer Magazine

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- 1 Ranma 1/2: Man Who Turns into Woman...Viz
- 2 Pokémon Vol. 6.....Viz
- 3 Pokémon Vol. 7.....Viz
- 4 Lodoss War: Heroic Knight.....Central Park
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In **Original Dirty Pair Vol. 4**, Kei and Yuri are sent to take out the leader of a new drug ring — who was also the top candidate at the 3WA training school during Kei and Yuri's training. Then the pair are confronted with the traumatized survivor of a mass murder, a little girl who may be the key to solving the crime — if they can convince her to speak. A 60-minute tape contains two episodes, scheduled for early November and priced at \$19.98 dubbed and \$29.95 subtitled.

### Central Park Media

The **Midnight Panther** anime will be released in mid-November on DVD-ROM for \$29.99. The Pussycats are the hottest singers around, but Lou Kei and Sonya are also secretly the assassins known as The Midnight Panthers. The DVD can be set for either the general release or the uncut version of the 60-minute feature. Two scenes are preset at Parental Control level NC-17. If the Parental Control on the DVD player is set for a lower level, these scenes will not play, and the viewer will see the general release version.

**Patlabor: The Mobile Police — The TV Series Vol. 8** contains six new episodes, beginning with a "relaxing" retreat to polish the squad's skills — where Noa stumbles on a suspicious crime scene and can't resist getting involved. The \$29.99 subtitled tape runs 150 minutes and is scheduled for release in early November.

In **Record of Lodoss War: Dark Shadow**, a young knight in training named Spark is sent after the dark wizard Wagnard, who is trying to resurrect the goddess of destruction. The 90-minute tape is priced at \$19.99 dubbed and \$24.99 subtitled and is scheduled for early November.

Gourry has been kidnapped, and it's Lina to the rescue in **The Slayers Next: Phantom City**. But even with the help of two former companions, can Lina find Gourry in the phantom city of Sairag? Scheduled for early November, this 100-

minute tape is priced at \$19.99 for both dubbed and subtitled versions.

**Twisted Tales of Tokyo**, from the adults-only Anime 18 line, contains four stories on one 60-minute tape: the three-part "Wicked Trio" and "The Naughty Professor." Scheduled for early November, the dubbed tape is priced at \$29.99.

### Viz

**Ranma 1/2 Martial Mayhem: Tea for Three** contains two new episodes of the TV series. First, a young gentleman and his tough-as-nails grandma introduce Ranma to the gentle art of the martial arts tea ceremony. (It's tougher than it sounds.) Then a young girl with a secret weapon challenges Ranma and Akane for the Tendo Dojo. It's a 52-minute dubbed tape scheduled for early November and priced at \$24.95.

A subtitled edition of **Ranma 1/2 Outta Control: My Fiancé, the Cat** is scheduled for mid-November release for \$29.95.

Coming in early November, the **Ranma 1/2 P-Chan Watch** is a silver-accented Seiko watch with a black leather band, priced at \$29.95.

**Silent Möbius: Karma** is a seven-issue series following the storyline of the *Silent Möbius* anime movie. An unknown being possesses Tokyo's new space elevator, and the A.M.P. is called out to evict it. The first 40-page, black-and-white issue has a cover price of \$3.25 and is scheduled for early November.

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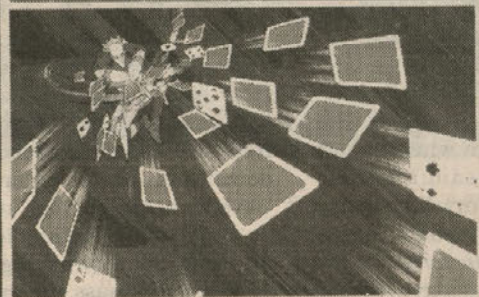
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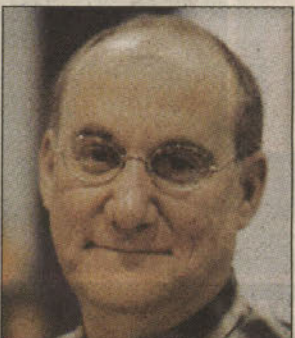
# Loeb and Sale give Batman a Dark Victory



Tim Sale

**"I have a visual cue for how I might see Robin and Batman working."**

— Tim Sale



Jeph Loeb

By Matt Brady

They took Batman to the depths of despair in the 13-part *Batman: The Long Halloween*, and now it's time to bring him back. For Jeph Loeb and Tim Sale, however, looking at the prospect of continuing their Batman story was daunting. After all, how do you follow up a commercial and critical hit like *The Long Halloween*? In the minds of some, *Long Halloween* could be seen as a professional high-water mark, a work that sets the bar high for any return engagements — so why return?

Loeb said, "There were a variety of reasons to return to Batman, but first and most important was that Tim very much wanted to draw those characters again. Second, there was a story I've wanted to do for a long time that would explain how Dick Grayson came into Batman's life and what that meant to Bruce. Third, as with any project I take on, I try and do the best job I can. Personally, I think *Dark Victory* is a stronger piece simply because Tim and I are better at our craft than we were three years ago. This was true of the span between *Long Halloween* #1 and #13, so I can hardly wait to see what we're doing on *Dark Victory* #13."

In addition to the desire to draw the characters again, Sale said he has other reasons for returning to Batman. "I never intended on going away completely from Batman," Sale said. "*Superman for All Seasons*, the *Grendel* story, and the *Heartthrobs* story for Vertigo were all the sorbet, the palate cleanser before getting back to the deep, dark chocolate of Batman. People seem to want to see me doing Batman, I certainly enjoy doing it, and it fits into my pattern of doing a melodramatic story using a lot of black — so returning to Batman

felt like coming home in a lot of respects. Also, we brought Batman to a certain point at the end



An early Sale sketch of Batman and Robin.

of *Long Halloween*, and Jeph wanted to know what happened after that. That's a lesser part of my motivation on *Dark Victory*, but it's in there, as well."

**Introducing Robin.** *Dark Victory*, however, presents unusual challenges for Loeb and Sale. Known for their brooding, atmosphere-rich Batman stories of years past, the pre-teen Robin is introduced in *Dark Victory*, a definite departure from the noir feel of *The Long Halloween*. While Loeb was gung ho to introduce Robin from the word go, it took Sale a while to warm to the idea.

"I've always fought the idea of bringing Robin or anyone else into our Batman stories," he said. "To me, Batman is a solitary figure. Before we had even done our first Batman story, Jeph and I had conversations about this. He's never understood how anyone could live so completely alone, but, in my mind, Batman has never felt 'alone' and wanted to do something about it. Batman in *The Justice League* or teaming up with Superman doesn't make any emotional sense to me."

Sale's mind started to change when he got a Robin of his own. "Having said all that, there is now a 10-year old in my life — my girlfriend's son," Sale said. "He made a couple of spot appearance in *Superman for All Seasons* — he was the kid on the ledge. Now, I have a visual cue for how I might see Robin and Batman working, and I guess, being an artist, experiencing first-hand what an athletic 10-year-old is like was the kind of thing that I needed to have."

"And of course, there's the fact that Jeph has beaten me down over the years. Also, it does make sense to bring Robin in, having taken Batman to the depths of loneliness and despair that we did at the end of *Long Halloween*. If we're going to bring him back and show what happens to him afterward, then bringing something extra to his emotional life makes sense."

While Robin doesn't show up in costume until the middle of *Dark Victory*, Sale is already planning to set him apart from Batman in terms of body language. "You have to consider that Robin is a little kid who enjoys playing in the shadows — which is different from Batman who lives in the shadows."

There's an enthusiasm in Robin that's not in Batman, and that will definitely translate in the way he moves, stands, and overall appears on the page."

**Continuing *Long Halloween*.** The story of *Dark Victory* is a continuation of sorts of *The Long Halloween*. In that story, Gotham was shown to be under the control of the Maroni and Falcone crime families. However, as Loeb explained, today Gotham's underworld is under the "control" of super-powered, garish freaks. How these freaks rose to take control is much of the story of *Dark Victory*.

At the same time, *Dark Victory* will examine the relationship between Dick Grayson and Bruce Wayne as well as the age-old question: Does Batman need a Robin?

"At the beginning of *Dark Victory*, Batman has lost not only his parents, but also a true friend in Harvey Dent, who became Two-Face in *The Long Halloween*," Loeb said. "That drives Bruce to become even more secluded than before, and that wears heavily on those who care for him: Catwoman, Gordon, and Alfred. It will take someone very special to tear down those walls and bring Batman out of his 'cave.'"

Loeb was reluctant to give too much more of the story away, saying only that *Dark Victory* will encompass the origins of the character and the natural progression Dick Grayson made into becoming, not only Batman's partner, but also his ward. Loeb said that the title *Dark Victory* has to do with Batman's own personal victory over the darkness that threatens to overtake him in light of *Long Halloween*'s losses.

And, yes, even with *Dark Victory* just beginning, the itch is already in the back of Loeb and Sale's minds: What's next? "I can't imagine not doing Batman again, but we'll see what happens within the year of doing *Dark Victory*," Sale said. "We don't want to do Batman *ad nauseam*, both because I'm sure we would get sick of it and I don't want to drive a good thing into the ground. I want people to look forward to the next Loeb and Sale Batman project. I can't think there will be another Batman story right after *Dark Victory*, but I can't imagine we won't return to Batman some time after this. We just love it too much."



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## Preview guest Comics Buyer's Guide

### \$50,000 art contest ...

Carbonaro said he was especially excited about his two major contests, whose results will be announced Sunday morning at the show. The first is an original comic art show with art in the comics, fantasy, or surreal genres. Originally, \$30,000 in prize money had been set aside for the winners, but Carbonaro said that has now been increased to \$50,000.

Three winners in three separate categories will be chosen from 25 finalists in each. The three categories are: Best Color Artwork, Best Pen and Ink Artwork, and Best Pencil Artwork. For Best Color Artwork, the first-place winner will receive \$20,000, second-place winner will receive \$10,000, and third-place winner will receive \$5,000. In Best Pen and Ink, first prize is \$7,500, second is \$2,500, and third is \$1,000. In Best Pencil first prize is \$2,500, second prize is \$1,000, and third prize is \$500.

Anyone, amateur to pro, can enter, and the deadline is Nov. 1. "We're trying to make New York a center for the art world," Carbonaro said. Art can be sent to Big Apple Conventions or brought to the show, but entrants do need to call Big Apple to register. There is a \$5 entry fee per person per category, and entries can be no larger than 18x24". Finalists' work will be on display during the show, and Carbonaro said that, while winning entries will become the property of Big Apple, non-winning entries can be sold by their respective owners at the show on Sunday.

### The "We'll Print It" contest ...

Brenner Printing is the sponsor of Big Apple's other major contest, the "Create a Comic Book, We'll Print It Contest." Carbonaro said it is dedicated to the memory of late Marvel Editor Mark Gruenwald. Brenner will print 4,000 copies of the final comic book, an anthology one-shot with three eight-page black-and-white stories by the three winners.

The first-prize winner's story will lead the issue, with the winner also providing the issue's cover. Second- and third-prize winners will have their eight-page stories in the issue. In addition, the first prize winner will receive 50% of the profits from the sale of the comic books, with the remaining 50% being put back into the contest. A cash prize of \$500 for first prize, \$300 for second, and \$200 for third will also be awarded. Entries will be judged by Jim Steranko, Peter David, and Heidi MacDonald. Winners will be announced Sunday morning.

Entrants can contact convention organizers for more information.

### For more information ...

More information is available via (718) 326-2713 or Big Apple Conventions, 74-05 Metropolitan Ave., Middle Village, New York, NY 11379.

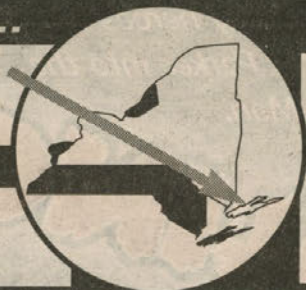
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# Big Apple blossoms into National Comic Book, Art, and Toy Show

By Brent Frankenhoff

After several years without a large comics show in New York City, Michael Carbonaro's Big Apple Conventions is set to put on The National Comic Book, Art, and Toy Show at New York City's New Metropolitan Pavilion Nov. 12-14.

Carbonaro said, "I hope this will be the biggest comics show New York has ever seen. It took us three years to find the proper venue. The Metro Pavilion is a non-union hall, properly air-conditioned and heated. This show will bring the whole collectible field up a notch in style."

**Filling a void.** Big Apple Conventions was formed to fill a void left when the last Great Eastern Convention ended before it began, in spring 1996. Initially known as "The Show Must Go on Show," Big Apple has held one- and two-day shows for the past three years in St. Paul's Church Auditorium at 9th Ave. and 60th St. The venue was limiting, allowing only a few thousand fans to attend each show.

Carbonaro said The National is not just a bigger version of his Big Apple shows. "We have a large room upstairs at the Pavilion devoted to our art show and we have constant events all three days. There are tons of sponsors with hundreds of giveaways and gift certificates." In addition to comics, the show will feature toys, trading cards, games, and science-fiction collectibles.

A 10-year plan is already in place for future shows, and Carbonaro added he plans to make The National into "an East Coast version of Comic-Con International: San Diego." He's labeling show aisles with such monikers as Yancy Street, Lois Lane, and Spawn Alley to enable attendees to find dealers and pros more easily. "I'm trying to make this

almost an amusement park," Carbonaro said, "with events and interesting exhibits from the comics and fantasy world."

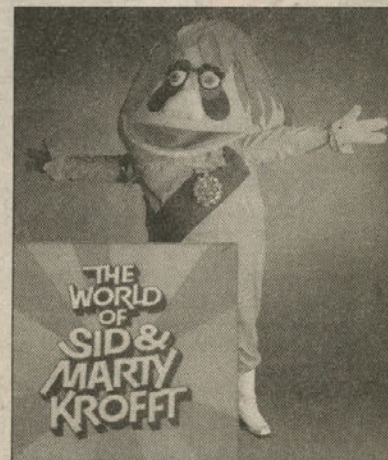
**Contests and events.** Among events scheduled are three separate costume contests, one per day. The themes are "Out of This World," "Super-Heroes," and "Pokémon." Other events include drawing classes, and a live radio interview show. A pair of contests, a TV trivia contest and a Star Wars trivia contest, both sponsored by Forbidden Planet, are also planned.



Artist Simon Bisley, best-known for his *Fleetway/Quality and Heavy Metal* work, is scheduled to attend.

**Guests galore.** In addition to the trio of judges for the "Create a Comic Book" contest, a number of other comics professionals including Michael Turner ("In his first New York appearance in at least two years," Carbonaro said), Simon Bisley, Jeff Jones, William Stout, John Romita Sr., David Mack, Tim Vigil, Brian Bendis, Mark Bodé, Joe Jusko, Miran Kim, Alex Horley, Rob Liefeld, and Joe Linsner are scheduled to attend.

Carbonaro said that Saturday morning children's program creators Sid and Marty Krofft are scheduled to attend, along with



several actors from their shows for a *World of Sid & Marty Krofft* reunion. "I believe it is the first time this pair has ever done a comics show together," he added. Other media celebrities scheduled to attend include Butch Patrick, Dirk Benedict, Robert Vaughn, Johnny Whitaker, and several *Playboy* models. Pro wrestlers, including Sgt. Slaughter on Saturday, are also scheduled to attend.

"I haven't been this excited, since I did a rock 'n' roll amusement park show in 1978," Carbonaro said. "People still remember that one, and I keep telling them they have to attend this show. We're having T-shirts that say, 'I was there,' made up. It's gonna be huge."



Actor Robert Vaughn, who played Napoleon Solo on *The Man From U.N.C.L.E.*, is one of the scheduled celebrity guests.



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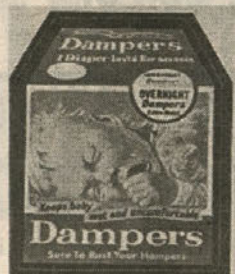
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## Can there be too many comics?

I have a theory. It is the theory, that is my theory, which is mine. A-hem! I'm still churning through the data collected in the *CBG Circulation Scavenger Hunt* and by various other methods, and while it's too early to say with any certainty, I'd guess that the number of individual comic books sold in the United States across all time may wind up in the **15 billion to 50 billion range**. Even at the low end, it's a staggering number. It'd be 50 comic books for every living American, if the comics all survived.

But, of course, they haven't. While I can't begin to guess at "mortality rates" for various titles in various eras, I'm confident that it could be done — a 1940 title with 30 extant copies today out of initial sales of 300,000 would seem to suggest a 60-year "survival rate" for that issue of 0.01%.

Which brings me to my theory. We know that direct market sales of comic books in the 1990s will wind up around **1.8 billion copies** — throw in newsstand and call it 2 bil plus. What's different now is that we can be certain that **most** of these comics still exist — and are in circulation. There are eight 1990s comic books out there for every American, and as comics keep coming out, that mountain o' comics gets higher. If the number of hardcore collectors is 250,000, we're looking at **8,000 1990s comic books for each of you**.

Could future industry troubles rise from collectors simply having enough comic books? I wouldn't have thought it possible, but now, with the demands a growing family is placing on space in my house, even I am viewing that dream gift of the 5,000 comics I most "need" differently — heck, I'm ditching duplicates as fast as I can just to accommodate new releases.

Is anybody else experiencing this — and is a major recycling program for lousy '90s comics really in our hobby's long-term best interests?

### Hostess® History Moment



After leaving the intensive care unit, Spider-Man thought better of his strategy for fighting Galactus.

### By the numbers

#### Good News, Finally edition:

**2%** The percentage by which September 1999 comics preorders by retailers, in dollars, topped those for September 1998.

**55 months** How long it's been since the last time any month's preorders topped the previous year.

Source: Comics Retailer #92, November 1999 issue.

### At a comics shop near you...

## The times, they keep on Changeling

I've got a trunkful of new independent comics from SPX — but you'll have to wait until next week, when the annual fifty-mod-giant-sized issue gives me room to spread out. In the meantime:

**Beast Boy #1** DC  
\$2.95, color, 32 pgs., ships Nov. 10

Ah, here's Changeling. I read *The New Teen Titans* religiously, so this ought to be easy to get into. Hmm. Never noticed that before. Better ask The Man Who Knew Too Much. "Hey, Brent!"

"Whaddya want?"

"Changeling — Beast Boy — whatever. Where do his powers come from?"

"He got bitten by a radioactive monkey."

"No, seriously."

"He caught a rare tropical disease as a child and his father gave him an experimental treatment..."

"Changeling's dad, Spider-Woman's dad — isn't the AMA going after these people?"

"Penfold, shush. Only animals

could survive the disease, and the treatment changed his DNA so he could bounce around from one end of the animal kingdom to the other. Anything he could think of."

"Right. But he turns into mice and bees. Where's the rest of his mass go? That's one heavy bee. You didn't say there was any kind of miniaturization thing in that origin."

"No. Hey, maybe the extra mass just shuffles off into a pocket dimension for a while."

"Gene therapy does dimensional shifts now? Not only that, but he's able to talk while he's a bee. What, does he keep his cerebral cortex and his vocal cords in the pocket dimension, too?"

"He's been changing into these things for years. You never noticed it before?"

"I guess I didn't pay attention because he was never really alone before. Except for that *Titans Spotlight*, he was always seventh fiddle wherever he was. But now that he's center stage in this four-issue series, I'm having a harder time getting my

brain around the premise. Particularly since Geoff Johns and Ben Raab have grounded their story in a very real setting — or as real as Hollywood schmoozefests get — the over-the-top fantastic elements are a little more disconcerting than they might otherwise be."

"Didn't bother me any. What difference does it make?"

PRO: Sometime simian gets solo shot.  
CON: Don't think too hard about it.

OVERALL: B

on page 18 sends suspension of disbelief off into the pocket dimension, anyway. While this series' mystery develops a bit too slowly this issue, *Beast Boy* ought to be of interest to *Doom Patrol* and *Titans* fans."

"Well, maybe you're right. The gorgeous science-fiction groupie chick

"John, who are you talking to?"  
"Penfold, shush."

Dictate didactic dialectics to: **Faraway Looks**, c/o CBG, 700 E. State St., Iola, WI 54990. E-mail to [millerj@krause.com](mailto:millerj@krause.com).

### COMICS newsline

Todd McFarlane Productions' Halloween notable this year is *Spawn: Blood & Salvation*. Written by Alan McElroy and painted by Ashley Wood, the 56-page story showcases Daniel Llanos from *Curse of the Spawn*.

Just a reminder: Time is running out. Call your Congressmen now to enact legislation prohibiting late-night and office comedians from joking all next year that they "keep writing '20th Century' on all their checks."

## BACK-ISSUE BIN BAFFLERS

### Hey, hey, LBJ — how many comics were you in today?

Well, we've done Clinton and Nixon comics — why not LBJ? Here's a comics curio, commentary courtesy **David Easter** of *Not Just Comix*:

Recently a customer brought a comic book to my shop that was not listed in the guides. After a few telephone calls, it was established that **Scott Hutchison**, manager of a local Little Caesar's, and I had come across something really strange.

*The Great Society Comic Book* is a four-color political satire on the **Lyndon B. Johnson** era. This \$1 comic book is copyrighted 1966, printed with a Parallax Comic Book Company logo, but published and distributed by Pocket Books Inc., with serial number #10135. The writer is listed as **D.J. Arneson**, and the artist is **Tony Tallarico**.

Several famous politicians of the time are depicted as super-heroes who have become members of the Group Resigned to End All Threats, the **G.R.E.A.T. Society**. The story sets these heroes in search of their missing leader, SuperLBJ. If they fail to find him, then Bobman and Teddy (**Robert** and **Teddy Kennedy**, respectively) will take over.



The issue is packed with guest stars. We get to meet Gaullefinger (**Charles de Gaulle**) and the Sicko Kid (**Fidel Castro**). **Lady Bird Johnson**, as **Wonderbird**, flies her glass plane à la **Wonder Woman**. **Richard Nixon** gets lampooned as the **Along Ranger**, riding a checkered horse into an interparty tussle with **Colonel America** (**Barry Goldwater**).

The last page suggests an upcoming #2: Has anybody seen it?

**JJM:** Turns out **Maggie Thompson** had them both, David — the comic book circulated through gift shops. Issue #2 featured the adventures of "Bobman and Teddy" and included cameos from even more politicians (including **Ronald Reagan**, with a reference to his 20 Mule Team Borax commercials, at left). Tallarico's sophomoric sendup seems to stab politicians in general and may not have resonated much more at the time; today, even those who were around may struggle to pick LBJ's cabinet members from the crowd. "It really epitomizes the transient nature of a lot of topical humor," Maggie said. It's such a jejune example, though, that it may be worth all the more to collectors of political comics. It will be in our 2001 guide; prices, anyone?

WAY TO  
GENERATE  
SOME BUZZ...  
I AM SO  
OUTTA  
HERE.



ANSWERS: Only #3, #6, #8, #9, and #11 are fake. The rest are real!

DELL  
FAUX  
COLOR  
#1

Next week is *CBG's* giant issue celebrating *Dell Four Color*. Which of these odd titles were not *Dell Four Color* issues?

1 The Wernher von Braun Story

2 The Dragoon Wells Massacre

3 Myron the Miniature Minotaur

4 Water Birds and the Olympic Elk

5 Silvertip and the Stolen Stallion

6 Go Swimming with Esther Williams

7 Bob, Son of Battle

8 Buying and Selling Used Cars

9 Globetrotting with Harry Hopkins

10 Yogi Bear Goes to College

11 Introducing... Television!

Answers in right margin



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| 102 Good 7                 | Crack Comics                           | 52 NC 2                                                                      | 111 Fair 24                            |
| 131 VG 14                  | 29 VG 66                               | 52 VG + 9                                                                    | Shadow Comics                          |
| Action Comics              | Crackjack Funnies                      | 8 Good 35                                                                    | 7 Good 75                              |
| 58 N.C. 30                 | 14 Good 35                             | Jumbo Comics                                                                 | 44 VG + 75                             |
| 89 N.C. 25                 | 35-38 NC 12                            | 48 Fair + 40                                                                 | Sparkler Comics                        |
| Adv. of Alan Ladd          | 43 NC 10                               | 75 Good 25                                                                   | 1 VG 11                                |
| 1 Good + (tape) 130        | Daredevil - 1941                       | 43 Fair + 25                                                                 | 1 (1940) VG (Jim Hardy) 60             |
| 2 Good + 40                | 1 NC (missing first & second wrap) 200 | Jungle Comics                                                                | 42 Fine 60                             |
| 6 VG 60                    | Adv. of Bob Hope                       | 73 Fair + 15                                                                 | Sparkling Stars                        |
| 1 Good 130                 | 3 NC 65                                | 98 Good + 40                                                                 | 15 VG 12                               |
| 12 Good (tape) 15          | 64, 67 VG 22                           | 100 Good + 30                                                                | Sparky Watts                           |
| 15 Good 18                 | 66 Good + 12                           | Na Na Na                                                                     | 9 Fine 24                              |
| 20 VG + 33                 | Detective Comics                       | 20 VG 20                                                                     | Spirit                                 |
| 22 VG 22                   | 72 NC 45                               | King Comics                                                                  | 12-8-40 Good 8                         |
| 23 VG + 26                 | 86 cover only 35                       | 47 Good (no back cover) 20                                                   | 3-29-42 Fine 18                        |
| 70 VG 8                    | 106 Fair 50                            | 68 Good 16                                                                   | 3-21-43 Fine 18                        |
| Airboy Comics              | Dick Tracy                             | 116 Good 9                                                                   | Spy-Hunters                            |
| Vol. 3 #12 VG 55           | F.C. #1 1939 (Fair-miss 4 pgs) 225     | Lil Abner Comics                                                             | 10 NC 6                                |
| Vol. 8 #1 NC 6             | 2 (1948) VG + 38                       | 68 VG + 33                                                                   | Star-Spangled Comics                   |
| Vol. 8 #3 VG + 24          | 9 VG 29                                | Man Comics                                                                   | 39 VG (loose cover) 70                 |
| All-Flash                  | 16 Fine + 35                           | 3 VG + 23                                                                    | 79 VG 110                              |
| 27 Good 45                 | 18 Fine 30                             | Marvel Family                                                                | Startling Comics                       |
| 30 Fair + 35               | 44 VG + 16                             | 26 VG 35                                                                     | 37 VG + 75                             |
| America in Action          | Don Winslow                            | 37 Good 17                                                                   | Sub-Mariner Comics                     |
| 1942 VG + 27               | 36 VG + 19                             | Master Comics                                                                | 7 NC 90                                |
| Animal Antics              | 62 VG + 17                             | 34 NC 25                                                                     | 22 VG + (miss C.F.) 100                |
| 6 VG 20                    | 63, 69 Fine 24                         | 39 Good + 60                                                                 | Superboy                               |
| 34 Good 7                  | 68 VG 17                               | 74 Good 15                                                                   | 9 Good 65                              |
| Batman                     | Dynamic Comics                         | 91 VG 25                                                                     | Super Comics - 1939                    |
| 21 Good (no back cover) 80 | 14 Fine (miss C.F.) 40                 | 95 VG + 30                                                                   | 15 Good 45                             |
| 78 VG + 125                | 16 Good 40                             | Men's Adventures                                                             | 112 Fine 20                            |
| 88 Fair 35                 | 140 VG + 14                            | 27 Fair 70                                                                   | Super Magician Comics                  |
| 89, 97 NC 17               | Fantastic Comics                       | Modern Comics                                                                | Vol 5 #3 Fine + 35                     |
| 109 VG 50                  | 2 NC (miss first wrap) 40              | 54 Good + 30                                                                 | Vol 5 #5 Fine 30                       |
| Bendix Adv. Comic          | Feature Film                           | More Fun                                                                     | Vol 5 #6 Fine 30                       |
| 1943 NC 6                  | 3 VG + 105                             | 7 Between 42-50 NC 50                                                        | Superman                               |
| Big Shot Comics            | Fighting Yank                          | 72 NC (miss first wrap) 50                                                   | 12 Fair (miss C.F.) 65                 |
| 51 VG 18                   | 19 VG + 90                             | 80 NC 65                                                                     | 32 Good 75                             |
| Black Cat Comics           | Flyin' Jenny                           | 80 NC 65                                                                     | 38 Fair 85                             |
| 24 Fine 45                 | 2 VG + 25                              | Mystery Men Comics                                                           | 42 VG-poc 42                           |
| Black Terror               | Four Most                              | 18 VG (5 spine split) 60                                                     | 44 Fair 48                             |
| 27 VG + 75                 | Vol. 3 #4 Fair 7                       | Mystic (1951)                                                                | 48 Good 60                             |
| Blackstone                 | Frisky Fables                          | 1 Nice NC 32                                                                 | 64 Fine-poc 110                        |
| Master Magician            | Vol. 2 #5 Good 5                       | New Funnies                                                                  | 68 Good-poc 35                         |
| 3 Fine 45                  | 3 VG 10                                | 69 Good (loose cover) 25                                                     | 79 Good 45                             |
| Blazing Comics             | Funny Book                             | 88 VG + 20                                                                   | 84 VG (large pc off back cover) 35     |
| 4 VG (coupon out B.C.) 35  | 2 Fair + 5                             | 123 NC 20                                                                    | Super Mystery Comics                   |
| Blue Beetle                | Funny Stuff                            | Nyoka                                                                        | Vol 1 #5 NC 20                         |
| 13 Good (no back cover) 30 | 7 Good 15                              | Our Gang                                                                     | Vol 2 #6 Fair 28                       |
| Blue Bolt                  | GE - Adv. In Electric                  | 11 Good + (Barks art) 48                                                     | Terry & Pirates                        |
| Vol. 3 #3 NC (miss C.F.) 4 | 1 (1947) NC 3                          | Pep Comics                                                                   | 19 VG 12                               |
| Vol. 4 #1 Good 15          | 2 NC 3                                 | Plasticman - (1948)                                                          | 22 VG 15                               |
| Vol. 6 #2 Good 7           | 3 NC 1                                 | Pocahontas - 1942                                                            | 24 NC 4                                |
| Boots & Buddies            | Power Special NC 1                     | 28 Fair 45                                                                   | 2 Good 55                              |
| 8 VG + 16                  | Green Hornet                           | 14 Good 38                                                                   | Tip Top Comics                         |
| Bulletman                  | 24 Good 36                             | 122 Fine 22                                                                  | 40 VG + 70                             |
| 2 Fair 90                  | 34 VG 65                               | 133 VG + 14                                                                  | 76 VG tape 20                          |
| Captain America            | 42 Good 24                             | 160 VG + 11                                                                  | 122 Fine 20                            |
| 9 N.C. 175                 | Green Mask                             | 162, 179 VG 10                                                               | 160 VG + 11                            |
| Captain Easy               | 2 Fair 70                              | 175 Fine 15                                                                  | 162, 179 VG 10                         |
| Circa 1940 NC 8            | 3 cover only 25                        | 195, 205 VG + 7                                                              | 175 Fine 15                            |
| Captain Marvel Adv.        | Heroic Comics                          | 73-75 NC 8                                                                   | Thrilling Comics                       |
| 3 NC (miss 7 pg) 30        | 55 VG + 12                             | Punch Comics                                                                 | ? Between 24-29 NC 14                  |
| 14 Good 70                 | Hit Comics                             | 2 NC (missing first & second wrap) 20                                        | Tomahawk - 1950                        |
| 68 VG 40                   | 5 NC (miss C.F.) 75                    | Ramar - 1954                                                                 | 1 Good + (tape) 115                    |
| 96 Fair 15                 | Humphrey Comics                        | 1 VG 30                                                                      | Uncle Sam - 1941                       |
| Captain Marvel Jr.         | 2 VG 12                                | Ranger Comics                                                                | 1 NC (missing story page - chap. 2) 80 |
| 10 Fair + 55               | Human Torch                            | 36 VG 40                                                                     | Wham Comics                            |
| 56 VG 34                   | 43 VG 32                               | 2 Good 80                                                                    | 23 NC 25                               |
| 62 VG + 25                 | Jack Armstrong                         | 1 cover only 150                                                             | 23 Good 55                             |
| 109, 110 VG 40             | 4 Good 10                              | Sensation Comics                                                             | 51 Good 22                             |
| 118 Fair 9                 | Joe Palooka                            | 1 NC (missing back part of first wrap - has complete Wonder Woman story) 400 | 99 Good + 22                           |
| Captain Midnight           | 2 Good 16                              |                                                                              | Wings                                  |
| 51 VG 33                   | 6 Fine 30                              |                                                                              | 54 VG + 36                             |
| 52 Fine 50                 | 7 VG + 24                              |                                                                              | 60 Good 15                             |

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**Oct 23 FL, Orlando.** Sci-Fi City Celebrates Geekdom. Troy Jewell, 6006 E. Colonial Dr., Orlando, FL 32807. PH: 407-282-2292.

## GEORGIA

**Oct 22-24 GA, Valdosta.** Comic Books, Beanie Babies, BB Card & Coll. Show, Mall, 1700 Norman Dr., T. 45, A: free. Robert Chambliss, PO Box 37272, Tallahassee, FL 32315. PH: 904-442-6682.  
**Nov 5-7 GA, Waycross.** Comic Books, Beanie Babies, BB Card & Coll. Show, Hatcher Point Mall, US Hwy. 1, T. 45, A: free. Robert Chambliss, PO Box 37272, Tallahassee, FL 32315. PH: 904-442-6682.

## ILLINOIS

**Oct 23 IL, Bridgeview.** Comic Book & Toy Show, Oremus Ctr. 79th & Oketo (2 blks. W. of Harlem Ave.), SH: 10am-3pm, T. 8', F: \$25, A: \$1. Mike, PH: 708-788-7276 or Jim, PH: 815-886-8925.  
**Oct 24 IL, Orland Park.** Comic Book, Sports, Toys, NASCAR & Beanie Show, Civic Ctr. La Grange Rd. (Rt. 45) at 147th St., SH: 9am-3pm, T. 85-6', F: \$30, A: \$1. John Leary, 9522 W. Shore Dr., Oak Lawn, IL 60453. PH: 708-423-1758.  
**Nov 7 IL, Decatur.** Central IL Comic-Con, Best Western. 450 E. Pershing Rd., SH: 9am-5pm, T. 16-6', F: \$25, for 1, \$45, for 2, A: free. Dale Moler, 621-W. Macon, Decatur, IL 62522. PH: 217-422-6916.  
**Nov 13 IL, Orland Park.** Comic Book, Sports, Toys, NASCAR & Beanie Show, Civic Ctr. La Grange Rd. (Rt. 45) at 147th St., SH: 9am-3pm, T. 85-6', F: \$30, A: \$1. John Leary, 9522 W. Shore Dr., Oak Lawn, IL 60453. PH: 708-423-1758.

## INDIANA

**Oct 16-17 IN, Merrillville.** Comic Book & Collectible Hobby Show, Century Mall, US 30 at Broadway, SH: Sat. 10am-9pm, Sun. 11am-5pm, T. 60, F: \$90, A: free. Gene Haberstich, PO Box 908, Goshen, IN 46527. PH: 219-533-1887.  
**Oct 22-24 IN, Hammond.** Comic Book & Collectible Hobby Show, Woodmar Mall, Indianapolis Blvd. at 165th St., SH: Fri. 10am-9pm, Sat. 10am-5:30pm, Sun. 11am-5pm, T. 60, F: \$90, A: free. Gene Haberstich, PO Box 908, Goshen, IN 46527. PH: 219-533-1887.  
**Oct 30-31 IN, Goshen.** Comics & Collectible Hobby Show, Inn. US 33 E., SH: Sat. 10am-6pm, Sun. 11am-5pm, T. 26, F: \$40, A: free. Gene Haberstich, PO Box 908, Goshen, IN 46527. PH: 219-533-1887.  
**Nov 13 IN, South Bend.** Michiana Comic Con, Holy Family Hall, Western at Mayflower, SH: 10am-5pm, T. 50, F: \$40, A: \$1. Jim Rossow, 53100 Poppy Rd., South Bend, IN 46628. PH: 219-232-8129 eves.

## KANSAS

**Oct 23-24 KS, Kansas City.** Comic Con, Reardon Civic Ctr. 500 Minnesota Ave., SH: Sat. & Sun 10am-4pm, T. 110, F: \$125, A: \$5. Bud Bortner, 6236 W. 27th St., Louisburg, KS 66053. PH: 913-837-3335.

## LOUISIANA

**Oct 17 LA, Thibodaux.** 2nd Annual Show, Howard Johnson Hotel, Rlenzi Room, 201 N. Canal Blvd., SH: 10am-5pm, T. 37-6', F: \$45-\$60, A: \$1.50. Ray Guidry, 614 W. 3rd St., Thibodaux, LA 70301. PH: 504-447-4136 or 225-272-0006.

## MARYLAND

**Oct 17 MD, Glen Burnie.** Comic Book, Non-Sports Card & Action Figure Show, Holiday Inn, Glen Burnie, Exit 3A off I-695, SH: 11am-4pm, T. 25, F: \$40, A: \$2, under 7 free. Fred Edson, PH: 410-783-1157.  
**Nov 7 MD, Laurel.** Comic Book, Non-Sports Cards & Action Figure Show, Best Western Hotel, 15101 Switzer Ln., (Exit 33B off I-95), SH: 11am-4pm, T. 25, F: \$50, A: \$2, under 7 free. Fred Edson, PH: 410-783-1157.

## MASSACHUSETTS

**Oct 24 MA, Boston.** Comic Book & Toy Spectacular, Radisson Hotel, Formerly Howard Johnson 57, 200 Stuart St., SH: 10am-4pm, T. 120-8', F: \$85, A: \$5. Primate Promos, David Cummings, PH: 978-388-5550.

## MICHIGAN

**Nov 7 MI, Saginaw.** Comic Book, Sports Card, Memorabilia, NASCAR, Toy & Beanie Babies Show, St. Vincent Home, 925 N. River Rd., btw. State St. & Gratiot Rd., SH: 9:30am-4pm. Rick Doud, PH: 517-754-0249.

## MISSOURI

**Oct 17 MO, Sunset Hills-St. Louis.** More Fun Fall 99 Comic Book Show, Holiday Inn SW, Watson Rd. & Lindbergh Blvd., SH: 10am-4pm, T. 30, A: \$3, 10 & under free. Jerry Stephan, PO Box 28726, St. Louis, MO 63146. PH: 314-647-1050.

## NEBRASKA

**Oct 24 NE, Omaha.** Monthly Comic Books, Coins, Ballcards, NASCAR & Automobile Collectibles Show, Holiday Inn, Ford Hall, I-80 & 72nd St., T. 100, F: \$30, A: free. Ed Bishop, 2016 E. 19th, Fremont, NE 68025. PH: 402-721-7364.

## NEW JERSEY

**Oct 15-17 NJ, Freehold.** Triple Play Comic Book, Sports Card, Memorabilia & Collectible Toy Show, Raceway Mall, 3710 Rt. 9, SH: mail hrs., T: 100-8', F: \$190, for 1, \$360, for 2, \$500, for 3, A: free. Ferdinand Parascandolo, 482 Retford Ave., SI, NY 10306. PH: 718-667-9588 or 967-9172.

**Oct 15-16 NJ, Pennsauken.** Philly Comic Book & Non-Sports Card Show, South Jersey Expo Ctr. Rts. 73 & 130, SH: Fri. 12noon-6pm, Sat. 10am-4pm, T. 140, A: \$5, under 12 free. Frank Reigher, 10220 Calera Rd., Phila., PA 19114. PH: 215-637-5744.

**Oct 17 NJ, Garfield.** Comic Books, Sports Card & Collectibles Show, Boys Club, 490 Midland Ave., SH: 9:30am-3:30pm, T. 70, A: \$1. Gary Sipos, 1 Garden Ct., N. Garfield, NJ 07026. PH: 973-340-2218 or 478-7662 day of show.

**Oct 17 NJ, Bordentown.** Comic Book, Toys & Sports Card Show, Armory, Rt. 206 off Exit 7 of NJ Tpke., SH: 9:30am-3:30pm, T. 70, A: \$2. EMCEE Conventions, PO Box 151, Hightstown, NJ 08520. PH: 609-448-7585.

**Oct 24 NJ, Clifton.** Comic Books, Sports Card & Collectibles Show, 802 Clifton Ave. (entrance on Colfax Ave.), SH: 9:30am-3:30pm, T. 50-8', A: \$1. Gary Sipos, 1 Garden Ct., N. Garfield, NJ 07026. PH: 973-340-2218 or 779-9332 day of show.

**Oct 24 NJ, Wayne.** Comic Book Expo, Holiday Inn, Rt. 46 Service Rd. (off of Rt. 23 S. to Rt. 46 Service Rd.), SH: 10am-4pm, T. 30-8', F: \$60, A: \$2. J. Paul, 10 Cross St., Montclair, NJ 07042. PH: 973-783-0608.

**Oct 31 NJ, Garfield.** Comic Books, Sports Card & Collectibles Show, Boys Club, 490 Midland Ave., SH: 9:30am-3:30pm, T. 70, A: \$1. Gary Sipos, 1 Garden Ct., N. Garfield, NJ 07026. PH: 973-340-2218 or 478-7662 day of show.

**Nov 6-7 NJ, Ocean Township.** Comic Book, Sports Card, Toy & Coll. Show, Seaview Square Mall, Rts. 35 & 66, Pky. Exit 102 S. to 100A N. to Rt. 66 E., SH: Sat. 10am-9pm, Sun. 11am-5pm, T. 60-8', A: free. Collectors Showcase, Sandy Grecco, PO Box 189, Atlantic Highlands, NJ 07716. PH: 732-291-1632.

**Nov 7 NJ, Garfield.** Comic Books, Sports Card & Collectibles Show, Boys Club, 490 Midland Ave., SH: 9:30am-3:30pm, T. 70, A: \$1. Gary Sipos, 1 Garden Ct., N. Garfield, NJ 07026. PH: 973-340-2218 or 478-7662 day of show.

**Nov 7 NJ, Wayne.** Comic & Collectibles Show, Co. #1 Firemens Convention Ctr. 1 Parish Dr. off 23 N. at Lincoln Park Ext., SH: 9am-3pm, T: 100-8', F: \$20, A: free. Phil DeMarzio, PO Box 4094, Wayne, NJ 07474. PH: 973-667-2112.

## NEW MEXICO

**Nov 7 NM, Albuquerque.** Collector Con, Marriott Hotel, 2101 Louisiana Blvd. NE, SH: 9am-3pm, T. 48, F: \$35, A: \$1.50. Henry Segovia,



## ALABAMA

**Oct 17-17 AL, Birmingham.** Comic Books, Sports Cards, NASCAR, Coins, Toys & Stamps Show, Riverchase Galleria. SH: mail hrs., T: 85, F: \$165. Bases Loaded Promos, Inc., 295 Bryan Rd., McMinville, TN 37110. PH: 931-939-3063 or 256-722-2738.

## ARIZONA

**Oct 17 AZ, Phoenix.** Collectors Marketplace 99, Day's Inn, 2420 W. Thomas, SH: 9am-5pm, T. 50, F: \$50, A: \$2, \$50 under 12. Lost Duchman Comics, Blake or James, 5811 N. 7th St., Phoenix, AZ 85014. PH: 602-604-9249.

## CALIFORNIA

**Oct 17 CA, Los Angeles.** Comic Book & Science Fiction Convention, Shrine Auditorium Expo Ctr. 700 W. 32nd St., SH: 10am-5pm, A: \$5. Bruce Schwartz, 2319-A West Olive Ave., Burbank, CA 91506. PH: 818-954-8432.  
**Oct 22-24 CA, Visalia.** Comic Book & Toy Fest, Mall, Corner of Mooney Blvd. & Walnut Ave., SH: Fri. 10am-9pm, Sat. 10am-7pm, Sun. 11am-6pm, T. 20-8', F: \$75, A: free. Cool Stuff Shows, 2330 W. Monte Vista, Visalia, CA 93277. PH: 559-307-4036.  
**Oct 30 CA, Santa Clara.** Collector Quest Show, Marriott. SH: 11am-4pm, T. 100, A: \$5, \$3. children. PH: 831-454-1857.  
**Nov 13-14 CA, Sacramento.** Comic Book & Sports Card Show, Sunrise Mall, Sunrise Blvd. & Greenback Ln., btw. Hwy. 50 & 80, SH: Sat. 10am-9pm, Sun. 11am-6pm, T. 90, F: \$115-\$130. CA Sports Card Show, PH: 530-241-4063.

## CONNECTICUT

**Oct 24 CT, East Hartford.** Comic Book Convention, Eiks Hall, 148 Robert St. (Exit 58 off of I-84), SH: 11am-5pm, T. 35, F: \$45, A: \$99. The Bookie, Hal Kinney, 206 Burnside Ave., E. Hartford, CT 06108. PH: 860-289-1208.

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## NEW YORK

**Oct 16-17 NY, Shirley.** Comic Book, Card, Toy & Action Figure Beanie Show. 20 Floyd Rd., SH: 10am-4pm, F: \$20. for 1 day, \$30. for 2 days, A: free. Joe Fabianski, PH: 516-276-1871 or 281-9672 day of show.

**Oct 16 NY, Sayville-LI.** Comic Book, Action Figures & Non-Sports Show, Atlas Mart Indoor Flea Market. 5750 Sunrise Hwy. & Broadway, SH: 10am-4pm, T: 30, A: free. Paul, PH: 516-289-7398.

**Oct 16-17 NY, Yonkers.** Comic Book & Sports Card Show, Mail at Cross County, 750 Central Ave., SH: 10am-6pm, T: 45-8, F: \$125., A: free. Steve Tepper, 1824 Merrick Rd., Merrick, NY 11566. PH: 718-894-5310 or 716-379-8300.

**Oct 16-17 NY, Massapequa.** Comic Book, Sports Card & Memorabilia Show, Sunrise Mall, Sunrise Hwy., SH: Sat. 10am-9:30pm, Sun. 11am-6pm, T: 90-8, F: \$115. for 1, \$200. for 2, \$295. for 3, \$395. for 4, A: free. Woodwill, Donna Giordanello, PO Box 5186, Hauppauge, NY 11788. PH: 516-582-6137.

**Oct 17 NY, Ozone Park.** Comic Book, Sports Card, Coin & Beanie Baby Show & AUCTION, Jewish Ctr. 107-01 Crossbay Blvd., SH: 10am-4pm, T: 36, F: \$37.50 for 1, \$65. for 2, A: \$1. Joseph Carvana, 114-32 150 Ave., S. Ozone Park, NY 11420. PH: 718-845-7240 or 848-1795.

**Oct 17 NY, Brooklyn.** Sun. Comic Book, Baseball Cards, Beanie Babies, Toys & Collectibles Show, Temple Hillel of Flatlands, 2164 Ralph Ave. (at Ave L), SH: 10am-5pm, T: 50-8, F: \$40. for 1, \$75. for 2, A: free. Sunrise Prods., Scotty O'Donnell, PO Box 340625 Ryder Stn., Brooklyn, NY 11234. PH: 718-251-2075 or 241-6477.

**Oct 22 NY, Brooklyn.** Fri. Comic Book, Baseball Cards, Beanie Babies, Toys & Collectibles Show, St. Dominics Church, 20th Ave. at Bayridge Pky. (same as 75th St.), SH: 6pm-10pm, T: 50-9, F: \$40. for 1, \$75. for 2, A: free. Sunrise Prods., Scotty O'Donnell, PO Box 340625 Ryder Stn., Brooklyn, NY 11234. PH: 718-251-2075 or 241-6477.

**Oct 23-24 NY, Shirley.** Comic Book, Card, Toy & Action Figure Beanie Show. 20 Floyd Rd., SH: 10am-4pm, F: \$20. for 1 day, \$30. for 2 days, A: free. Joe Fabianski, PH: 516-276-1871 or 281-9672 day of show.

**Oct 24 NY, Brooklyn.** Comic Book, Sports Card & Beanie Babies Show, Golden Gate Inn, Knapp St. & Shore Pky., SH: 9am-4pm, T: 35-8, F: \$45., A: free. Mark Dillon, PH: 718-266-1625.

**Oct 30-31 NY, Shirley.** Comic Book, Card, Toy & Action Figure Beanie Show. 20 Floyd Rd., SH: 10am-4pm, F: \$20. for 1 day, \$30. for 2 days, A: free. Joe Fabianski, PH: 516-276-1871 or 281-9672 day of show.

**Oct 30 NY, New York City.** Comic Book, Sports Card & Memorabilia Show, St. Illuminators Cathedral, 221 E. 27th St. (bet. 2nd & 3rd Ave.), SH: 10am-4pm, T: 25-8, F: \$40., A: \$1. Edmond Elmokian, 18 Oakland Ave., West Hempstead, NY 11552. PH: 516-564-9319.

**Oct 31 NY, Syracuse.** Collectorfest, State Fairgrounds, Horticultural Bldg. State Fair Blvd., Rt. 690, Exit 7, enter Gate 2, SH: 10am-4pm, T: 200, A: \$3., under 10 free. Central NY Promos., Lyn Lake, 35 Hubbard St. Apt. 1, Cortland, NY 13045. PH: 607-753-8580.

**Nov 6 NY, Sayville-LI.** Comic Book, Action Figures & Non-Sports Show, Atlas Mart Indoor Flea Market. 5750 Sunrise Hwy. & Broadway, SH: 10am-4pm, T: 30, A: free. Paul, PH: 516-289-7398.

**Nov 7 NY, Massapequa-LI.** Wizards Extravaganza, Elks Lodge, Veterans Blvd., behind Massapequa Railroad Station, T: 40. Wizard Collectibles, Valerie Becker, PH: 516-731-2509.

**Nov 7 NY, Brooklyn.** Sun. Comic Book, Baseball Cards, Beanie Babies, Toys & Collectibles Show, Temple Hillel of Flatlands, 2164 Ralph Ave. (at Ave L), SH: 10am-5pm, T: 50-8, F: \$40. for 1, \$75. for 2, A: free. Sunrise Prods., Scotty O'Donnell, PO Box 340625 Ryder Stn., Brooklyn, NY 11234. PH: 718-251-2075 or 241-6477.

If a state is not listed in this issue's calendar, it is because we received no show listings for that state for this time period.

If you are planning to attend a show some distance from your home, we advise you to call the show's promoter for any last-minute changes and information.

**Nov 7 NY, Buffalo-Amherst.** Comic Book, WNY Toy & Collectible Show, Holiday Inn, 1881 Niagara Falls Blvd. SH: 9am-3pm. Joe D'Agustine, 6604 Toyal Pky. N., Lockport, NY 14094. PH: 716-433-5064.

**Nov 12-14 NY, Manhattan.** Big Apple Comic Book & Toy Convention, New Metropolitan Pavilion, 125 W. 18th St. (btw. 6 & 7th Ave.), SH: Fri. 1pm-8pm, Sat. 10am-7pm, Sun. 10am-6pm, T: 115, A: \$12. ea. day, \$25. for 3 day pass. Mike or Chris, 74-05 Metropolitan Ave., Middle Village, NY 11379. PH: 718-326-2713.

**Nov 12 NY, Brooklyn.** Fri. Comic Book, Baseball Cards, Beanie Babies, Toys & Collectibles Show, St. Dominics Church, 20th Ave. at Bayridge Pky. (same as 75th St.), SH: 6pm-10pm, T: 50-9, F: \$40. for 1, \$75. for 2, A: free. Sunrise Prods., Scotty O'Donnell, PO Box 340625 Ryder Stn., Brooklyn, NY 11234. PH: 718-251-2075 or 241-6477.

**Nov 13-14 NY, Yonkers.** Comic Book & Sports Card Show, Mail at Cross County, 750 Central Ave., SH: 10am-6pm, T: 45-8, F: \$125., A: free. Steve Tepper, 1824 Merrick Rd., Merrick, NY 11566. PH: 718-894-5310 or 716-379-8300.

## NORTH CAROLINA

**Oct 16 NC, Charlotte.** Carolina Con 99 Comic Book Convention, Ramada Inn, Interstate 77 (Exit 7), SH: 10am-4pm, F: sold out, A: free. PH: 704-424-3453.

## OHIO

**Oct 17 OH, Canton.** Comic Con, Sheraton Inn (Belden Village), I-77, Exit 109, SH: 10am-4pm, T: 28-8, F: \$50., A: \$2., 6 & under free. Jeff Harper, 5220 Loma Linda NE, Canton, OH 44714. PH: 330-499-6056.

**Oct 24 OH, Ashtabula.** Comic Book, Toy & Collectibles Show, Progress Center, 3116 N. Bend Rd., SH: 10am-3pm, A: \$2., under 12 free. Roger or Mandi, PH: 440-224-2327.

**Oct 29-31 OH, St. Clairsville.** Comic Book, Sport Cards, NASCAR & Beanie Show, Ohio Valley Mall, Banfield, Mall Rd., SH: mail hrs., T: 45, A: free. Tom Vienneck, PO Box 284, Rices Landing, PA 15357. PH: 724-592-5038.

## PENNSYLVANIA

**Oct 22-24 PA, Stroudsburg.** Comic Book, Toys & Sport Collectibles Show, Stroud Mall, Rt. 611, T: 6' & 8', F: \$80-\$100. Two Brothers Collectibles, PH: 570-603-1208.

**Nov 7 PA, Williamsport.** Comic Book, Action Figure, Non-Sports Card Show, Genetti Hotel & Conv. Ctr. 200 W. 4th St., SH: 10am-5pm, T: 8, F: \$60., A: \$2. Jodia Promos., Joseph Figured, RR 2, Box 904, Cogan Station, PA 17728. PH: 570-494-1551.

**Nov 7 PA, Philadelphia.** Comic-Con, Stadium Holiday Inn, 10th St. & Packer Ave., SH: 10am-4pm, T: 48-6, F: \$65. for 1, \$120. for 2, A: \$3. Derek Woywood, 10 Chelsea Cir., Clementon, NJ 08021. PH: 856-782-0817.

## TENNESSEE

**Oct 23-24 TN, Kingsport.** Comic Book, Cards, Racing & Toy Show, Civic

Auditorium, 1550 Fort Henry Dr., SH: Sat. 10am-5pm, Sun. 10am-5pm, T: 60, F: \$65., A: \$1. Bill Henderson, 346 Fuller Estate Cir., Morristown, TN 37813. PH: 423-581-8386 or 581-3041.

**Nov 13 TN, Morristown.** Comic Book, Sports Card, Racing & Toy Show, Talley-Ward Recreation, 324 S. James St., SH: 10am-5pm, T: 45, F: \$37.50, A: free. Bill Henderson, 346 Fuller Estate Cir., Morristown, TN 37813. PH: 423-581-8386.

## TEXAS

**Oct 16-17 TX, Austin.** Fat Cat Productions Comic Book & Toy Collectors Super Show, Palmer Auditorium, Lower Level, S. 1st & Riverside, SH: Sat. 10am-5pm, Sun. 10am-4pm, T: 200, A: \$6. for both days, children free. Roger Quijano, PH: 281-293-8663 or 738-8620.

**Oct 23-24 TX, Plano.** Sci-Fi Expo & Toy Show, Convention Center, 2000 E. Spring Creek Pky., T: 275. Ben Stevens, PO Box 941111, Plano, TX 75094. PH: 972-578-0213.

**Oct 29-31 TX, Lubbock.** HubCon III, Holiday Inn, Lubbock Plaza, 3201 Loop 289 S., F: \$30. for weekend before Sep 1, \$35. thereafter. Hub-Con Entertainment, PO Box 94353, Lubbock, TX 79493. PH: 806-789-1501.

**Nov 13-14 TX, Austin.** Collectors Expo, Palmer Auditorium, (lower level), South First & Riverside, SH: Sat. 9am-6pm, Sun. 10am-4pm, T: 200, F: \$80., A: \$3. good for 2 days, under 12 free with adult. Sally Wallace, 6702 Lexington Rd., Austin, TX 78757. PH: 512-454-9882.

## VIRGINIA

## Convention Calendar Listing Form

Show site (city & state) \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of show \_\_\_\_\_

Location (hotel, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Street address \_\_\_\_\_

Hours of show \_\_\_\_\_

Admission charge \_\_\_\_\_

Number of tables and cost per table \_\_\_\_\_

Show promoter \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Debbie Schellin, Comics Buyer's Guide Convention Calendar, 700 E. State St., Iola, WI 54990



# Dateline @!?!\*

BY FRED HEMBECK

THEY'RE OUT OF CONTROL! THEY'VE ABSOLUTELY LOST THEIR MINDS!!

hm?



THE PEOPLE AT DC COMICS. THEY'VE GONE INSANE!

Oh YES, I WAS JUST READING ABOUT IT. BUT APPARENTLY THEY'VE COME TO THEIR SENSES, BECAUSE IT SAYS HERE THEY'VE BELATEDLY SHREDDED ALL COPIES OF THE ELSEWORLDS 80 PAGE GIANT FEATURING THAT OFFENDING SUPERBABY STORY.



FOOL-- THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT!

NO? YOU'RE NOT CONCERNED JUNIOR THERE IS GONNA

GLOM A COPY AND START GNAWING ON ELECTRICAL CORDS, NAPPING IN TRAFFIC, OR CRAWL INTO A MICROW--



THIS PIECE OF BLASPHEMY IS WHAT I'M CONCERNED WITH!!

"FLINCH" #3, THE VERTIGO HORROR ANTHOLOGY?



BUT MA'AM, THIS IS CLEARLY LABELLED AS BEING "SUGGESTED FOR MATURE READERS". WHY, IF YOU HOLD IT AT JUST THE RIGHT ANGLE--AND THE SUN IS DIRECTLY OVERHEAD-- YOU CAN MAKE OUT MOST OF THAT ADVISORY, SO I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOUR PROBLEM IS?..

MY PROBLEM IS WITH THE LAST PIECE OF FILTH IN THIS BOOK.



"SATANIC"? PURPORTEDLY A DREAM EXPERIENCED BY WRITER GARTH ENNIS AFTER VIEWING THE "TITANIC" FILM THAT'S DRAWN BY KIERON DWYER-- AND RATHER NICELY, I MIGHT ADD. HE DOES AN ADMIRABLE JOB OF CAPTURING THE ILLUSTRATIVE ART STYLE OF THE ERA, AND TO MY WAY OF THINKING, DWYER IS QUITE THE UNSUNG TALENT. WHY, PEOPLE SHO-

YES, WELL, GARTH ENNIS, Y'KNOW? YOU'VE GOTTA EXPECT OVER-THE-TOP FROM HIM, BUT DID: THE GRININESS OF HIS TALES IS ALWAYS LBAVED WITH A HEALTHY DOSE OF DARK HUMOR.

OKAY. hm, LET'S SEE-- THE STORY, IN LARGE PART, PLAYS OUT WORDLESSLY. SOON AFTER THE TITANIC SETS SAIL, THE WEALTHY FIRST CLASS PASSENGERS QUICKLY TURN ON THOSE TRAVELING IN STEERAGE...

THEY...uh, THEY ATTACK THEIR HAPLESS VICTIMS WITH A VARIETY OF KNIVES AND HATCHETS...AND, OH MY, A SOCIETY MATRON APPEARS TO BE HOLDING DOWN A YOUNGER, PARTIALLY CLOTHED WOMAN AS AN ELDERLY GENT, UM, ABUSES HER--AND, ah, THAT LOOKS TO BE A DECAPITATED NOGGIN THERE IN THE FOREGROUND, RESTING IN A... er... POOL OF BLOOD?..

LOOK, I REALIZE THIS APPEARS TO BE A BIT EXTREME. BUT GOSH, TO MY KNOWLEDGE, THERE'VE BEEN NO PRESS RELEASES ISSUED REGARDING A CHANGEOVER FROM DETECTIVE COMICS TO DEBAUCHER'S COMICS, SO--

THAT'S NOT IT. THAT'S NOT THE PROBLEM!



IT'S...NOT? THEN, WHEN THEY ALL STRIP BUCK NEKKID AND OFFER UP HEARTS FRESHLY RIPPED FROM THEIR VICTIM'S CHESTS TO THEIR LORD, SATAN, WHILST KNEELING ABOUT A PENTAGRAM SCRAWLED IN BLOOD, IS THAT IT?

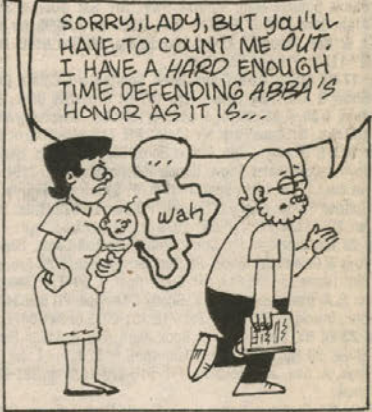
SURELY YOU CAN'T OBJECT TO OL' SCRATCH'S RIGHTEOUS DESTRUCTION OF THE SHIP AS HIS WORSHIPPERS WAIL IN UNISON, "WE DESERVED IT!! WE DESERVED IT!!" JUST DESSERTS AND ALL?..

...THE EPILOGUE, WHERE SURVIVORS FROM STEERAGE, WHILE ROWING AWAY IN LIFEBOATS, CONCOCT THE ICEBERG STORY TO EXPLAIN THE SINKING OF THE UNSINKABLE VESSEL?..

"STILL, LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE, NO CELINE DION."..

HOW DARE THE PEOPLE

WELL? AREN'T YOU GOING TO SUPPORT ME IN PROTESTING THIS GROSS INJUSTICE?





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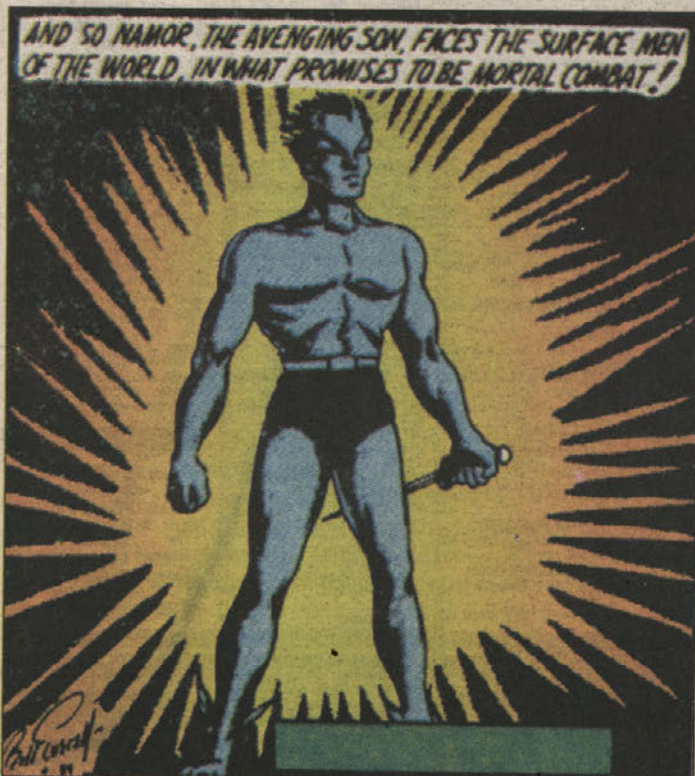
TERMS: USA shp/ins \$8 Priority, \$5 regular. Large groups send sufficient. One freebie per client. Layaway O.K. Individual issues available from lots/specials at guide. Written offers considered on unsold items 30 days after ad appears. See our previous ads in the series for great stuff.

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Marvel's first super-hero was Namor.

# Celebrating 60 at Marvel

By Brent Frankenhoff

Marvel is 60! Wait a minute, the younger fans say, didn't *Fantastic Four* #1 usher in the Marvel Age of Comics in 1961? Well, yes, but the company that would become Marvel got its start in comic books in 1939 with *Marvel Comics* #1. Before that, publisher Martin Goodman and his partner, Louis Silberkleit (later instrumental in the formation of what would become Archie), published a line of pulp magazines in the early 1930s. In the mid-'30s the two split, and Goodman continued the line, introducing titles and characters that would reappear when the comics line got under-way.

The first of the characters that would later make their way to comics was Ka-Zar, an imitation of Edgar Rice Burroughs' Tarzan. The jungle adventurer would only have a three-issue run in the pulps, but would later appear in *Marvel Comics* #1 and, from time to time, during the Marvel Age of Comics. A short-lived science-fiction pulp magazine, *Marvel Science Stories*, later changed to *Marvel Tales* and finally to *Marvel Stories* before folding in 1941.

**The first Marvel hero.** In early 1939, Bill Everett created The Sub-Mariner for *Motion Picture Funnies Weekly*, a giveaway comic book for theaters. Produced by Funnies, Inc., the promotional item failed, and Everett's creation was offered to Goodman, who repackaged the story in *Marvel Comics* #1.

Published in October 1939, the 10¢ comic book not only presented The Sub-Mariner, but also introduced Carl Burgos' Human Torch, a comic-book version of Ka-Zar, The Masked Raider Western character, and the non-super-powered Angel.

The first issue of *Marvel Comics* was the only one to bear that title. With #2, the title changed to *Marvel Mystery Comics*. However, for reasons unknown, Goodman didn't call the company publishing the new comics Marvel, but rather Timely, and launched an entire line of super-hero, war, romance, horror, funny-animal, and



Carl Burgos' Human Torch made his first appearance in *Marvel Comics* #1 (above). The flaming android's further adventures (and clashes with Namor) were chronicled in later issues, when the title changed to *Marvel Mystery Comics* (right).

Western comics over the next few years.

To get the new line under way, Goodman hired his own in-house staff of one, Joe Simon. The 24-year-old had been supporting his family since he was 18, beginning with work at various newspapers and later in the earliest comics. Before being hired by Goodman, Simon was working for Funnies, Inc., which produced many of the stories for the fledgling Marvel line. Eventually, Simon hired his friend Jack Kirby as staff artist, and the two collaborated on features not only for Timely but also for other publishers. The duo soon found the workload at Timely to be too much, so Goodman's wife's nephew, Stanley Martin Lieber, was hired. The 17-year-old began by getting coffee for the men and eventually began his writing career by producing one of the two-page text features required for comics in those days. The pen

name he chose for the story was "Stan Lee."

**The first crossover and cliffhanger.** During the first couple of years of Marvel's genesis, the company's two biggest characters, The Human Torch and The Sub-Mariner, began their ongoing feud. Starting in *Marvel Mystery* #8, Burgos and Everett created what later came to be known in comics as the crossover, when their two characters met and fought each other. The crossover also led to comics cliffhangers, as the story was extended over three issues to keep readers coming back for more.

With World War II looming on the horizon, both The Torch and The Sub-Mariner began fighting the Axis, and a more patriotic hero was called for. In March 1941, Simon and Kirby trotted out *Captain America* #1. The red, white, and blue hero struck a





chord with readers, and the series quickly became one of the company's best sellers.

The three heroes, joined by super-speedster Whizzer and super-heroine Miss America, formed Timely's answer to DC's Justice Society of America, when The All-Winners Squad was formed in, appropriately enough, *All-Winners* #19 in 1946.

By 1947, Timely had added the phrase "A Marvel Publication" to the covers of many of its comics, but that would soon come to an end when the super-hero line folded as the '40s came to an end.

Through the 1950s, Marvel kept going with a string of Western and horror titles published under its Atlas imprint. A brief attempt to revive the super-heroes in the mid-'50s with watered-down versions of the characters failed. Some of the monsters introduced in the horror titles of the late '50s would eventually return to menace Marvel's new line of super-heroes in the 1960s.

In late 1961, Goodman, pointing to the success of DC's *Justice League of America*, directed Lee to produce a super-team for Marvel. With Kirby back in the Marvel bullpen, Lee and Kirby began what has come to be known as The Marvel Age of Comics with *Fantastic Four* #1 (Nov 61). Over the next few years, more heroes were introduced, including the company's most-recognized hero, Spider-Man. In the nearly 40 years since, Marvel has grown to become one of the two biggest comics publishers in the country.

**Celebrating the anniversary.** Marvel has made a number of plans for the months surrounding its 60th anniversary. According to Marvel Associate Manager Retail Sales, Advertising, and Promotion Bill Rosemann, a 60th anniversary logo will appear on the covers of every Marvel product shipping in October.

Rosemann added that the celebration of the company's anniversary began ear-

ly with *Avengers* #11/2, which shipped Sept. 29. "Although it's not an official part, I feel it fits in nicely with the anniversary," he added.

Another series that isn't officially part of the anniversary celebration is *X-Men: Children of the Atom*, which began in mid-September. Set before the events of *X-Men* (first series) #1, the mini-series presents the previously untold story of how Professor Xavier assembled his team of teen-age mutants. "It's not a story that simply retells continuity, but an all-new adventure that has never been told before," Rosemann pointed out.

**Re-creating a Golden Age.** Marvel's Golden Age isn't being overlooked, with two projects dedicated to the anniversary.

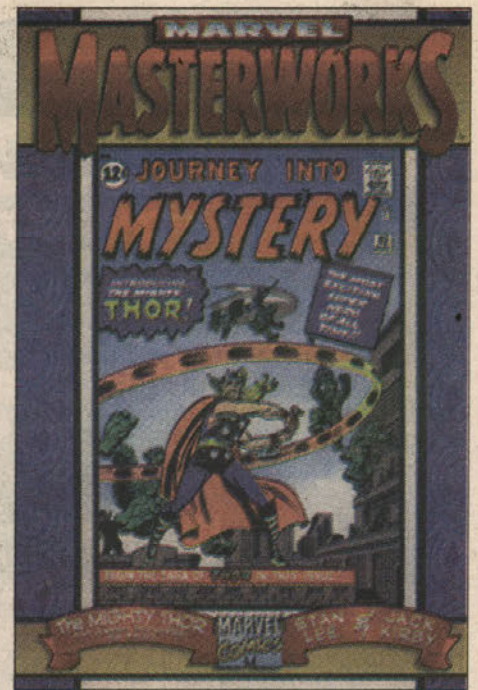
*Marvel Mystery Comics*, an 80-page reprint of several Golden Age stories, retails for \$3.95 and reprints stories featuring The Human Torch, The Sub-Mariner, the original Vision, The Angel, and Captain America. Golden Age artist Alex Schomburg provides the cover for the collection. According to Editor Tom Brevoort, the Schomburg cover was originally done for an issue of *Marvel Mystery* in the 1940s, and 90% of the material in the collection has never been reprinted before. "This is as close to reliving the experience of an actual issue of *Marvel Mystery* as most fans can get," he added. "It will look as much like the Golden Age version of the series as humanly possible." The collection is scheduled to ship Oct. 13.

Brevoort is also the editor of Marvel's other October reprint: *Timely Presents: All-Winners*. Shot from an actual copy of the 1946 original issue of *All-Winners* #19, the one-shot reprints the first appearance of The All-Winners Squad. Brevoort said that it will be printed on toned paper to "give it an 'old comic book' feel, but the paper is far superior to anything they had available in 1946." Artist Ray Lago provides a painted recreation of the original cover for the reprint, and the original cover itself is reproduced inside. (It can also be seen on this week's cover.) Writer Roy Thomas provides an afterword discussing the formation of the All-Winners Squad and its importance in the super-hero pantheon. Retailing for \$3.99, the one-shot is scheduled to ship Oct. 27.

Brevoort added that long-time Marvel fans may recall that the story from *All-Winners* #19 was "poorly reprinted" once before, in *Fantasy Masterpieces*, Marvel's 1960s reprint series. "This reprint is much improved," he said. "The difference between the two reprints is like night and day."

If the two Golden Age projects go over well, Brevoort said, more may be done. "Buy two."

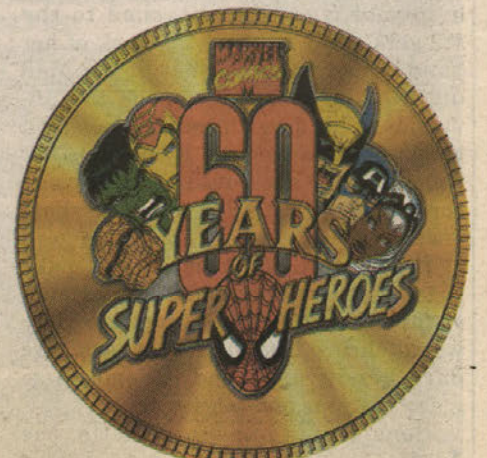
**Marvel unearths more recent history.** Marvel's Silver Age is also scheduled for the reprint treatment in September, with the re-release of *Essential*



*Avengers* Vol. 1. In October, a reprinting of *Marvel Masterworks* Vol. 18 as *Marvel Masterworks: Thor* and the second volume of *Essential Fantastic Four* are scheduled. The two *Essential* volumes retail for \$14.95 each, while the *Masterworks* retails for \$34.95.

In tribute to the latest *Hulk vs. Thing* battle in October's *Hulk* #9, Marvel is collecting the best of the duo's previous dust-ups in the *Hulk vs. Thing* one-shot. Rosemann said that the 96-page collection "is another example of Marvel offering affordable collections of important reprint material. I, for one, am going to enjoy reliving their best battles." Scheduled to ship Oct. 20, the one-shot retails for \$3.99.

Marvel celebrates both its 60th anniversary and the return of Doctor Doom to the Marvel universe in November with *The Villainy of Doctor Doom*, a 176-page trade paperback retailing for \$17.95, which collects Doom's most infamous moments. Brevoort, who wrote the book's introduction, said, "This collection shows why Doctor Doom is the pre-eminent Marvel super-villain and why he stands head and shoulders above all other Marvel villains." While the book collects mostly stories by Lee and Kirby, Brevoort said that at least one story from John Byrne's run on *Fantastic Four* would be included. The collection's





cover is inked by Klaus Janson and was originally pencilled by Jack Kirby. Rosemann said that Janson had the pencilled piece "hanging on his wall, he took it down, inked it, and it's finally being published."

**New as well as old.** The untold story what occurred between *X-Men* (first series) #66 and *Giant-Size X-Men* #1 is revealed in *X-Men: The Hidden Years*, an ongoing series written and pencilled by John Byrne and inked by Tom Palmer. "It's a story of the original five for fans who like Silver Age Marvel," Rosemann said. The series begins with a 48-page issue retailing for \$3.50 and scheduled to ship Oct. 6.

Another series that tangentially ties in to the 60th anniversary is Marvel's latest *Captain Marvel* series, featuring the son of the Kree warrior. Written by Peter David with art by ChrisCross, the second issue, scheduled to ship in December, features a variant cover by Jerry Ordway, who previously wrote and provided covers for DC's *Power of Shazam!* featuring the original Captain Mar-



vel. "So we have Ordway doing Captain Marvel again, sorta," Rosemann added, laughing.

One final series and related collection round out the 60th anniversary celebration in December: the Western series *Blaze of Glory* and *Gunslingers*, a collection of classic Western tales featuring Two-Gun Kid, Rawhide Kid, and other Marvel Western heroes or, as Rosemann put it, "Everyone who appears in *Blaze of Glory*."

According to Brevoort, the 80-page collection's line-up hadn't been totally decided on at presstime, but might include stories from 1950s as well. Both *Blaze of Glory* #1 and *Gunslingers* are scheduled to ship Dec. 15 and each retails for \$2.99.

In addition to Marvel's own products celebrating its 60th anniversary, Dynamic Forces has scheduled three lithographs for November and December. A Jack Kirby Captain America lithograph painted by Alex Ross is scheduled for October, as is a lithograph by Ross based on the cover of *Avengers* #4. Dan Jurgens and Jerry Ordway are the artists on the Marvel Millennium lithograph, featuring a group shot of the Marvel heroes, scheduled for December.

All three lithographs retail for \$19.99 each. The two Ross projects are also available signed for \$39.95, while the Jurgens/Ordway lithograph is available signed by the artists for \$49.95.

**An event for fans and pros.** Both men said they were excited about the anniversary. Rosemann said, "It's great to be here at a time when we look back at not only the Marvel Age of Comics in the '60s but also to the Golden Age. It's exciting to be a part of that."

Brevoort said he views the anniversary as an opportunity "to introduce fans to neat things we did in the past and neat things we're doing in the present. Hopefully, they'll like what they see and come back for more in the future."

Rosemann added, "It's a tribute to the imaginations of the creators that these characters are still around. Marvel's been around for 60 years and we're aiming to be here for 60 more. If you're going to spend your time with any group of heroes, we're the group to spend it with."



Dear Mr. Silver Age,

To paraphrase an old super-villain line, where did *The Wasp* get those wonderful toys?

Natalia R. Stalingrad

**Mr. Silver Age says:** I assume you're talking about those Wasp stings she wears on her wrists, Tasha. Amazingly enough, *The Wasp* made it through 14 adventures by using available sewing needles and sharp sticks before she finally got a real weapon to battle super-villains. That happened in *Tales to Astonish* #57 (Jul 64) when our insecty pals were "On The Trail of The Amazing Spider-Man!"

Needless to say, the stings were the creation of her good buddy Hank Pym, who created two highly compressed air guns that strapped to the backs of her arms just above her wrist.

When she slipped her finger through a special ring that attached to the stingers and ran along the back of her hand, something like what Spider-Man did with his web-spinners on the underside of his arm, the sting-gun shot a blast of compressed air. By bending her finger down, she could send out one continuous burst or a series of short ones.

Fortunately, Hank thought to make the stings of the same molecular substances as their costumes, so they would shrink with her. That was sure darn handy stuff, and it came in so many textures and fabrics, too.

Considering our story's title, the

## Oh, Wasp, where is thy sting?



Hank unveiled *The Wasp's* new stingers and taught her how to use them in *Tales to Astonish* #57 (Jul 64). Unfortunately, he didn't mention how soon they'd run out of power.

first person *The Wasp* tried her stingers on turned out to be another denizen of the bug world: Spider-Man. Except at this point in his career, Spidey was still thought to be evil — even by Avenger-type heroes. So it was easy for the villainous Egghead to plant a false

message from one of Hank's ant scouts warning that the web-slinger was going to attack them.

Hank sent Janet out to search for the web-slinger, warning her not to take him on once she found him. Oh, like that was gonna work.

Sure enough, she found Spidey swinging around the city and shot him with her sting.

But she used too hard a blast, and it knocked him off his web. He recovered and trapped Jan, bringing Hank to the scene. Mayhem, as they say, ensued — allowing Jan to zap Spidey with her stinger again with a more controlled blast, proving to herself that she could make it work.

This diversion allowed Egghead to hold up an armored truck. What a criminal genius!

Needless to say, you can imagine how well this worked out, once Spidey, Giant-Man, and the Wonderful Wasp figured out what was going on. This time, *The Wasp* got to try her stinger on some real bad guys, albeit the usual underlings and henchmen. She also got to learn that her sting only had so many charges, something Hank might've mentioned in that six-panel training session.

Because of this introduction, *The Wasp* and *The Spider* didn't exactly wind up pals, which Hank thought seemed reasonable, since the two creatures are such natural enemies. Makes sense to me, too, but I've read way too many old comic books. Hank pointed out that Spider-Man did seem to be a handy guy in a pinch, though.

That didn't make any difference to Jan, who was still voting against Spidey on that natural-antagonism thing two years later, when Spidey tried to join *The Avengers* in *Amazing Spider-Man King-Size Special* #3. She was one stubborn, albeit wonderful, wasp.



# CBG Calendar Notes

Shows listed are multiple-day, non-mall-show events with the primary focus on comic books. Further information about these and other shows, as well as creator appearances, can be found each week in the CBG features *What, Where, and When* and *Now Appearing*.

• **Kansas City Comic Book Convention**, Oct. 23 and 24 at the Reardon Civic Center, 5th & Minnesota, Kansas City, KS. Special guest: Barry Windsor-Smith (Saturday only). Hours: Saturday 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sunday 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Admission: \$5. Info: (913) 451-4805.

• **Motor City Comic Con**, Oct. 23 and 24 at the Novi Expo Center, Novi, 43700 Expo Ctr. Dr., Novi, MI. Guests include: Guy Davis, Matt Hawkins, William Messner-Loebs, Martin Nodell, John Ostrander, Chris Sprouse, and Jill Thompson. Hours: Saturday 11 a.m.-7 p.m.; Sunday 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Admission: \$10/day; \$16/both days, children 6-10 \$6/day with a paid adult; children 5 and under free with a paid adult. Info: (248) 426-8059.

## Continuing This Week

• **Cartoon Art Museum**, 814 Mission St., San Francisco, CA. Call for updates on current exhibits: (415) CARTOON.

• **Hero**, an exhibit of the work of Japanese artist Yoshitaka Amano, on display through Oct. 31 at the Orensanz Center for the Arts, 172 Norfolk St., New York, NY. The

multimedia exhibit includes drawings from the upcoming *Sandman: Dream Hunters*; such videogames as *Final Fantasy V, VI, and VIII*; kimono; screenings of Amano's animated film *1001 Nights*; ceramics; and a preview of Amano's newest character, Hero. Special events during the exhibit include a panel discussion on comics at 7 p.m. Oct. 14 and a panel discussion on videogames at 7 p.m. Oct. 26. Center hours: Tuesday through Sunday, noon to 9 p.m. Info: (212) 529-7194.

• **International Museum of Cartoon Art**, 201 Plaza Real, Boca Raton, FL 33432. Call for updates on current exhibits: (561) 391-2200. **Current exhibit: 50 Years of Peanuts: The Art of Charles M. Schulz**, a celebration of the 50th anniversary of Schulz' world-famous comic strip, featuring his early work, his products, and his life, on display through Jan. 30.

## New comics scheduled to ship this week

The following information is taken from publisher and distributor solicitations and updates and is as accurate as possible at press time. Check with your local retailer to find out what day new comics go on the shelves. Comics that are delayed or rescheduled will be tracked in future CBG Calendars.

Note: ♦ indicates a rescheduled comic book that appeared in a previous CBG Calendar.

### Alternative Comics

♦ Peanutbutter & Jeremy, \$2.95 (Jul)

### Archie Comic Publications

Betty & Veronica #143, \$1.79  
Cheryl Blossom #28, \$1.79  
Jughead's Double Digest #64, \$2.99  
Sonic the Hedgehog #78, \$1.79

### Caliber

♦ Saint Germaine: The Man in the Iron Mask, \$2.95 (Jul)

### Chaos! Comics

Armageddon #2 (of 4), \$2.95  
Undertaker #8 (two covers), \$2.95

### Dark Horse

Aliens: Apocalypse: The Destroying Angels TPB, \$10.95  
Bob Burden's Original Mystery Men #4 (of 4), \$2.95

Dark Horse Presents #147, \$2.95  
Drakoon: Flames of Empire (#1 of 6) #25, \$2.95

Feeders, \$2.95  
Hellboy Jr. #1 (of 2), \$2.95

Predator: Xenogenesis #3 (of 4),

\$2.95

Spyboy #1, \$2.50

Usagi Yojimbo #32, \$2.95

### DC Comics

Animaniacs Featuring Pinky and the Brain #55, \$1.99

Aquaman #62, \$1.99

Batman #572, \$1.99

Batman: Dark Victory #1 (of 13),

\$4.95

Books of Faerie: Molly's Story #4 (of

4), \$2.50

Cartoon Network: Starring ... #4,

\$1.99

Dreaming #43, \$2.50

Flash & Green Lantern: The Brave &

the Bold #3 (of 6), \$2.50

Gen13 #46, \$2.50

Giantkiller #5 (of 6), \$2.50

JSA #5, \$2.50

L.A.W. (Living Assault Weapons) #4

(of 6), \$2.50

♦ Michael Moorcock's Multiverse

TPB, \$19.95 (Oct. 3-9)

Sci-Tech #4 (of 4), \$2.50

Secret Origins of Super-Villains 80-

Page Giant #1, \$4.95

Son of Superman HC, \$24.95

Superboy #69, \$1.99

Superman: The Man of Steel #95,

\$1.99

Titans #10, \$2.50

♦ Tomorrow Stories #3, \$2.95 (Oct.

10-16)

Top Ten #4, \$2.95

Young Justice #15, \$2.50

### Image Comics

♦ Desperate Times TPB, \$14.95

(Sep)

♦ Intrigue #2, \$2.95 (two covers)

(Sep)

♦ Spirit of the Tao #13, \$2.50

(Sep. 19-25)

♦ Weasel Guy: Road Trip #2, \$3.50

(Sep)

### Marvel Comics

Bishop: The Last X-Man #3, \$1.99

Captain America #24, \$1.99

Daredevil #10, \$2.50

Fantastic Five #3, \$1.99

Galactus the Devourer #4 (of 6),

\$2.50

Hulk #9, \$1.99

Hulk vs. Thing, \$3.99

Marvel Masterworks: Thor Vol. 1

HC, \$34.95

Peter Parker: Spider-Man #12,

\$2.99

Thunderbolts #33, \$1.99

X-51 #5, \$1.99

X-Man #58, \$1.99

X-Men #95, \$1.99

X-Men: Children of the Atom #2 (of

6), \$2.99

♦ X-Men: True Friends #3 (of 3),

\$2.99 (Sep. 5-11)

### Viz Communications

Animerica Extra Vol. 2 #11, \$4.95

Dragonball Z Part 2 #11 (of 14),

\$2.95

Inu-Yasha Vol. 5 TPB, \$15.95

Maison Ikkoku Part 9 #7 (of 10),

\$3.50

Mobile Suit Gundam 0079 #8 (of 8),

\$2.95

## Cancellations

The following items have been announced as canceled or postponed. If a publisher resolicits for any of these items, they will be listed again in the CBG Calendar.

ABC: Bad Apples: High Expectations #1 (Jul)

Leather (Jul)

Maria #1 (Jul)

Poison Red #1 (Jul)

ACG: Hillbilly Comics #1 (Jul)

Arrow: War of the Worlds: Memphis Front #3-5 (Jul-Sep)

Awesome: Allies #1 (Apr)

Avengelyne #3 (Apr)

Coven/Re:Gex #2 (Jul)

Rob #1 (Apr)

Black Swan: Great Guns #1 (Jul)

CPM: Demon Beast Invasion TPB (Jul)

Urotsukidōji: Return of the Chojin #1, #2 (Sep, Oct)

Day One: Astounding Space Thrills #5 (Oct)

DC: Tom Strong #6 (Oct. 3-9); rescheduled for

December.

Gun Dog: Gunner #4-7 (Jun-Sep)

Hammer and Anvil: Portrait of a Young Man as a

Cartoonist (Jul)

Illustration: Don Paresi Treasury (Jul)

Image: Aria #5-7 (May-Sep)

Derring Risk #1 (Jun)

Tales of the Darkness #5 (Aug); rescheduled for

December.

Zorro: Matanzas #1, #2 (Sep, Oct)

Last Gasp: Discipline Vol. 2 (Jul); rescheduled for

December.

London Night: Lucinda's Spell Movie Adaptation (Oct)

Mixx: Sorcerer Hunters/Mixx Manga Vol. 1 (Oct);

rescheduled for December.

Pan: Knewts of the Round Table #6, #7 (Jul, Sep)

Penny Farthing: Victorian #8 (Oct)

Re-Visionary: Carnal Comics True Stories #1 (Jul)

Studio Chikara: Pop Parody #1 (Jul); rescheduled for

December.

Thorby: Hemingway's Dead (Jul)

Xxxenophile: Fox on Sex (Jul)

## Shipping notes and updates

• **Confirmed shipping:** We have received confirmation that the following titles have shipped and should be available in stores. This reflects shipping information received through Oct. 1.

ABC: Double Impact 2069 #1, \$3 (two spec eds., \$5; nude ed., \$10) (Jul)

Acclaim: Shadowman Vol. 3 #3, \$2.50 (Sep)

Amaze Ink/Slave Labor: Mister Blank #11, \$2.95 (Aug)

Oddjob #3, \$2.95 (Sep)

Wyrd: The Reluctant Warrior #3 (of 6), \$2.95 (Sep)

Antarctic: World War II: 1946 #3, \$2.50 (Sep)

Arcane: Prophecy of the Soul Sorcerer #4 (of 4), \$2.95 (Aug)

Archie: Jughead #123, \$1.79 (Sep. 26-Oct. 2)

Pals 'n' Gals Double Digest #45, \$2.99 (Sep. 26-Oct. 2)

Sonic Super Special #11, \$2.29 (Oct. 10-16)

Veronica #94, \$1.79 (Sep. 26-Oct. 2)

Beanworld: Larry Marder's Beanworld Book Four, \$11.95

(Aug)

Claypool: Deadbeats #37, \$2.50 (Aug)

CPM: Dark Angel #4, \$2.95 (Aug)

Frontier Line #1, \$2.95 (Aug)

Dark Horse: Blade of the Immortal: Heart of Darkness (3 of 8)

#37, \$2.95 (Sep. 19-25)

Buffy the Vampire Slayer #13, (two covers), \$2.95 (Sep.

26-Oct. 2)

Dirty Pair: Start the Violence! (two covers), \$2.95 (Sep.

26-Oct. 2)

Ghost Vol. 2 #12, \$2.95 (Sep. 26-Oct. 2)

Out for Blood #1 (of 4), \$2.95 (Sep. 26-Oct. 2)

Outlanders Vol. 7 TPB, \$14.95 (Sep. 26-Oct. 2)

Star Wars #10, \$2.50 (Sep. 19-25)

Star Wars Tales #1, \$4.95 (Sep. 26-Oct. 2)

DC: Authority #7, \$2.50 (Sep. 26-Oct. 2)

Batman & Superman: World's Finest #8 (of 10), \$1.99

(Sep. 26-Oct. 2)

Cartoon Network Starring #3, \$1.99 (Sep. 26-Oct. 2)

Day of Judgment #5 (of 5), \$2.50 (Sep. 26-Oct. 2)

Day of Judgment Secret Files #1, \$4.95 (Sep. 26-Oct. 2)

Detective Comics #738, \$1.99 (Sep. 26-Oct. 2)

Dexter's Laboratory #3, \$1.99 (Sep. 26-Oct. 2)

Divine Intervention: Gen 13, \$2.50 (Sep. 26-Oct. 2)

Faith #1 (of 5), \$2.50 (Sep. 26-Oct. 2)

Flash #154, \$1.99 (Sep. 26-Oct. 2)

Flinch #6, \$2.50 (Sep. 26-Oct. 2)

Gen13 I Love NY TPB, \$9.95 (Sep. 26-Oct. 2)

Hellblazer #142, \$2.50 (Aug. 22-28)

JLA #35, \$1.99 (Sep. 26-Oct. 2)

Legion of Super-Heroes #121, \$2.50 (Sep. 26-Oct. 2)

More Secret Origins 80-Page Giant Replica Ed., \$4.95 (Sep.

26-Oct. 2)

Superman for All Seasons (hardcover), \$24.95 (Sep. 19-

25)

Superman in the Sixties TPB, \$19.95 (Sep. 5-11)

Superman: The Man of Tomorrow #15, \$2.95 (Sep. 26-

Oct. 2)

Transmetropolitan: Year of the Bastard TPB, \$12.95 (Sep.

26-Oct. 2)

Wonder Woman #150, \$2.95 (Sep. 26-Oct. 2)

Discovery: Screaming Eagle HC, \$19.95 (Oct)

Fantagraphics: Bradleys #4 (of 6), \$2.95 (Sep)

Outrage, \$2.95 (Aug)

Pop Life #3, \$3.95 (Aug)

Image: Adventures of Evil & Malice #2, \$3.50 (Aug)

Darkness #27, \$2.50 (Sep. 26-Oct. 2)

Deity: Revelations #2, \$2.95 (Jul)

Forever Amber #3 (of 4), \$2.95 (Sep)

Jinxo Torso #6, \$4.95 (Aug)

Lady Pendragon: Dragon Blade #5, \$2.50 (Aug)

Rising Stars #2, \$2.50 (Sep. 5-11)

Spawn: The Undead #4, \$1.95 (Sep)

Witchblade #35, \$2.50 (Sep. 26-Oct. 2)

Witchfinder #1 (of 3), \$2.95 (Sep)

Last Gasp: Troubles of Janice Part 1, \$12.95 (Aug)

Twenty, \$14.95 (May)

Marvel: Astonishing X-Men #3 (of 3), \$2.50 (Sep. 19-25)

Avengers #1 1/2, \$2.50 (Sep. 26-Oct. 2)

Avengers #22, \$1.99 (Sep. 26-Oct. 2)

Conan: Death Covered in Gold #3 (of 3), \$2.99 (Sep. 26-

Oct. 2)

Inhumans #11 (of 12), \$2.99 (Sep. 26-Oct. 2)

Wolverine #144, \$1.99 (Sep. 19-25)

X-Force #96, \$1.99 (Sep. 26-Oct. 2)

Metaphrog: Strange Weather Lately Vol. 2, \$9.95 (Jul)

Monkeysuit: Monkeysuit Vol. 1, \$9.95 (Oct)

NBM: Drabble: Drabbles, \$9.95 (Aug)

Oni: Grrl Scouts #3 (of 4), \$2.95 (Jun)

Oni Double Feature #13, \$2.95 (Aug)

Whiteout: Melt #1 (of 4), \$2.95 (Sep. 26-Oct. 2)

Penny Farthing: Victorian #7, \$2.95 (Aug. 29-Sep. 4)

Peregrine: Independent Voices #2, \$2.95 (Sep)

Q: Varic: Chronicles of the Dark Prince #3, \$1.95 (Sep)

Radio: Genus #37, \$2.95 (Aug)

Pornotopia #1, \$2.95 (Aug)

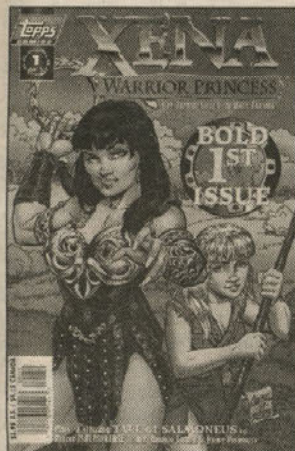
Realm: Battlestar Galactica Season 3 #3 (two covers), \$2.99





"The child in me is delighted. The adult in me is skeptical."

— **Saul Bellow**, on receiving the 1976 Nobel Prize for literature



**"To deal with the paucity of letters we were receiving on *The X-Files* and *Xena*, I stole and then tweaked an idea from DC Editor Murray Boltinoff."**



We were talking about comic-book letters columns in last week's column. We're talking about them again this week. I hope you're finding this interesting.

After spending my first months as a Marvel employee working on the British "weeklies" — reprints of Marvel's earliest super-hero tales repackaged for the overseas market — I kinda sorta graduated to the company's American comic books and magazines. My hesitation comes from my having somehow managed to keep working on the British weeklies while adding more titles to my schedule. Clearly, I loved my job. Just call me a true believer.

The British weeklies didn't get a lot of mail; the American comics did. But the abundance of the latter was not an unmixed blessing.

When I started doing letters columns for the American titles, I was determined to give the readers the kind of balanced, serious, and even witty columns I'd so admired in comics edited or written by Julius Schwartz and Roy Thomas. The "balanced" part was going to be the hardest to achieve — because most of the mail, upwards of 95% of the mail, was favorable. It didn't matter what comic book or which writers and artists; the mail was overwhelmingly positive. Were we really that good? Not on your life.

One of the first lessons I learned was that readers are more likely to write to a comic book they like or, in an effort to increase their chance of getting published, find — or invent — something good about the comic book to which they are writing. Sure, there were those readers who delighted in the negative, but they were surprisingly few in those pre-online days.

Given the nature of the mail I was receiving, how could I give the readers letters columns that accurately reflected the mail we were receiving? Let's say we got 30 letters on any given issue of *Ghost Rider*. Some 95% of them would be

favorable. Even with lots of editing, I couldn't fit more than four or five letters into any issue's letters column.

An accurate reflection of the letters the issue received would have been 4.75 favorable letters and 0.25 of an unfavorable letter. If I ran an unfavorable letter in its entirety, that would give the impression that 20% of our readers disliked the issue, which wasn't what our mail was showing. Not running any unfavorable letters, a policy some editors adopted, would also be inaccurate. I ended up running, though not every issue, one "token" letter from the one or two unfavorable ones that came in.

With such a limited number of "negative" letters from which to choose, it was not uncommon for me to edit or rewrite them. I never wanted any reader to look bad in a letters column, even though said reader may have hated a previous issue. Sometimes I felt as though I were translating letters into English, but, as with letters I'd rewritten for the British weeklies, I tried my best to reflect accurately the original writer's viewpoints.

Even during the 1970s, though, there were comics which simply did not receive a lot of mail. When a young Paul Levitz — as opposed to the older Paul Levitz who still (eerily) looks much the same as he did back then — was Joe Orlando's assistant on *House of Mystery* and other similar titles, he faced much the same problem I had faced on the British weeklies. Except he was smart enough to get friends like Carl Gafford, Paul Kupperberg, me, and others to gather in the Levitz basement office and write bogus letters for him. All it cost him was pizza and sodas. Is it any wonder he's now running DC Comics and I'm not?

**The most challenging letters columns I ever wrote** were for the *Xena* and *X-Files* titles published by Topps Comics in recent years. Neither received a great deal of mail, and the *X-Files* columns were further hampered by the approvals process. To put it as nicely as possible, the *X-Files* people were — difficult.

I've worked on several licensed comics projects in my career; none were ever quite as — difficult — as *The X-Files*. Maybe it was that their people didn't know what they wanted from the comics, maybe it was that they didn't want the comics, period. But, if you ever asked why Topps was publishing *The X-Files* on such an erratic schedule, there's your answer.

Even the letters columns came

under the microscopic scrutiny of the *X-Files* approvals office, which didn't have much of a sense of humor and which seemed to read volumes into the most innocuous letters or responses. To make my life easier, I started sending in columns almost twice as long as needed. That way, even after the usual cuts, they were still long enough to fill the allotted number of pages. Old dog, new trick.

To deal with the paucity of letters we were receiving on *The X-Files* and *Xena*, I stole and then tweaked an idea from DC Editor Murray Boltinoff's columns of the 1960s. Boltinoff would often run interesting factoids in and around the letters from his readers. I did much the same thing, except that I concentrated on *Xena* and *X-Files* news items found in magazines and newspapers — and online. These tidbits proved popular with my Topps editors, the few readers who were writing to the titles, and, to my delighted surprise, with the *X-Files* approvals folks. Old dog, old trick.

**I've never kept a tally of any kind**, but I'm sure I've written at least a couple hundred letters columns for various publishers in my 27 years as a comics professional. Like Boltinoff, I tried to send brief notes to readers who wrote to comics I edited or wrote. Unfortunately, that was only rarely possible in my pre-online days and has become only marginally more possible since I discovered the wonders of e-mail. There are too many other demands on my time, too many family and professional obligations. I'm not that excited young man who could devote his every waking moment to his job. My passion glows as hot as ever, but it's been tempered in the forges of the real world.

Talking to fans at conventions and online, I often wonder whether the comic-book letters column will disappear from the comics of tomorrow as completely as have public service announcements and Twinkies ads that used to run in comics. Editors have taken a more cavalier attitude toward the columns in recent years, thinking nothing of replacing them with a house ad or an additional page of story, the former more often than the latter.

I have heard readers complain that, when their letters do see print, they have been rewritten so extensively that they no longer reflect the views originally expressed. I've also heard complaints that only their letters of praise are published. Either situation can and often does sour read-

ers on writing further letters to the comics.

Are fans less interested in expressing their opinions on the titles they buy and read? If you think so, a few visits to comics message boards and newsgroups will likely change your mind on that score. But, with the relative ease of online communication, there has come what many comics fans and pros alike consider an increase in — to put it as nicely as possible — rude behavior.

The anonymity provided by the use of online nicknames (a practice I loathe beyond my capacity to express adequately) allows some posters to savage fans and pros alike in a manner most would be too craven to even attempt in a real-world situation. The speed of electronic communication is also a factor; it's easy to post without realizing there's a human being on the other end of your slings and arrows — without thinking.

To its credit, online comics fandom does prove there are still readers who enjoy critiquing new comics and discussing them with their fellows. Many creators and editors have taken advantage of this community by allowing or requesting readers to send their letters of comments to them via e-mail. My favorite current letters pages are probably those appearing in *Kurt Busiek's Astro City* and *Sergio Aragonés' Groo*, both of which combine print and electronic reader comments with informative and/or witty answers. Sure, they come up short in the "Xena news" department, but, aside from that, I find them entertaining and interesting.

Despite my misgivings for the future of comic-book letters columns, it would be a loss, if they were to disappear from tomorrow's comic books. I would encourage those who put together today's letters columns to strive to make them every bit as good as the stories. The per-page cost of comics has risen steadily over the years; even one more page of entertainment for the price would make them a better and more satisfying purchase.

I'd also encourage fans to continue writing to their favorite (and even their not-so-favorite) comics. Write letters that are clever, friendly, and stimulating. By doing so, you encourage, not only your fellow readers, but also the professionals who create the comics you love — or don't love — so much.

Comments on and review items for this column should be sent to: **Tony's Tips**, P.O. Box 1502, Medina, OH 44258.



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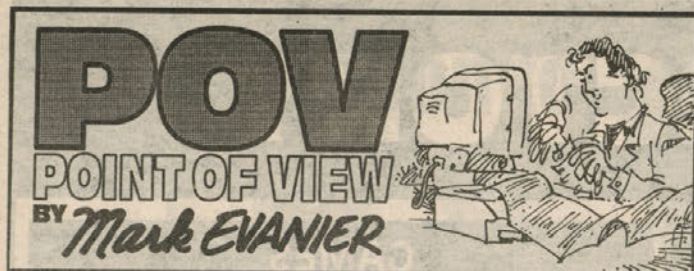
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This is a P.S. to my report on the 1999 Comic-Con International ...

A friend who never attends these always asks me after each one, "What was the most important company at the con?" He means, "Which company had folks the most excited? Which was the exhibitor they were all talking about?" In the past, the answer to that has usually been DC, Marvel, or Dark Horse — although Pacific Comics and Tekno Comics seemed to have had everyone talking the years that they were at their peaks.

## "What was the most important company at the con?"



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So I'm not sure the most talked-about company is anything more than the most talked-about company. What I am sure of is which outfit was on everyone's lips this year: *eBay*.

*eBay*? The on-line swap meet? *eBay*? The Internet site where folks auction everything from a 1922 Tin Lizzie Ford to a 1999 Thin Lizzie CD? *eBay*? The company whose name I couldn't type without turning off the AutoCorrect Capitals feature of Microsoft Word?

Yes, that *eBay*. (Disclosure: Lest the wrath of *Brill's Content* descend on me, I should point out that the publisher of this newspaper has some sort of publishing arrangement with *eBay*, the nature of which I don't know a danged thing about.)

*eBay* and its many clones are changing the way old comics, original art, and all kinds of collectibles are sold.

One sees odd, inexplicable buying patterns. Sergio Aragonés and I have a book out from Dark Horse called *The Groo Houndbook*. About three weeks ago, someone put a copy up for bid on *eBay* and the thing went for \$14.75 plus \$2.50 postage.

I am mystified — and not just that anyone would pay real money for a book on which I worked. I am mystified, because anyone's who Internet-savvy enough to find their way to *eBay* could easily click on over to [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) or [www.barnesandnoble.com](http://www.barnesandnoble.com) and, with one click, purchase *The Groo Houndbook* for \$7.96 plus \$3.95 postage and handling.

That's a guaranteed-fresh copy from an established seller who will ensure delivery and ship it off to you tomorrow without waiting for checks to clear. You don't have to wait for an auction to close or anything.

I am absolutely not trying to steer you away from *eBay* or the Yahoo On-Line Auctions or any of

them. They are wonderful services, and I've purchased a few dozen rare records and *tsatskes* via *eBay*. Most of my friends are shopping on *eBay*, and I hear the National Rifle Association is now using it to buy Congresspersons online.

But the point of an auction is supposed to be to pay the lowest possible price, right? Why, then, did four different folks put in bids of more than the *amazon.com* price for *The Groo Houndbook*?

The only possible answer I've come up with is that these were abnormalities of the marketplace — flukes, in other words. Four folks who either didn't think to check prices elsewhere or who all got caught up in a bidding frenzy and happened to all bid on the same lot in the same week — an occurrence that may or may not be repeated. In fact, the week after, another copy of the exact same book went for \$9.10, postage included, and yet another didn't even snag a minimum bid of two bucks.

**So what's the problem, if an item occasionally sells for a foolishly high price?** Well, I don't know for sure that there is one, but there *might* be one.

To explain why, I need to relate an incident that I heard about in the '60s and '70s — and, now that I think about it, maybe even into the '80s. It may well be a fandom urban legend, but I heard it so many times, I figure it must have happened somewhere, sometime ...

The tale has many variations, but the essence of it is that two comics-fan dealers — we'll call them Frick and Frack — picked out a very rare issue, let's say *Batman* #1. At the time, mint-condition copies of *Batman* #1 could be had for around \$500 each in the collectors' market. (Don't laugh at that pitiful price tag. You're reading a column by a guy who once passed up a copy for \$75, because that seemed absurd at the time and, anyway, we all knew it would never go much higher ...)

So, the story goes, Frick and Frack pooled their funds and quietly bought 10 copies of this precious comic book. Then Frick phoned the Associated Press and told them, "I thought you'd like to know that I just paid the record price of \$1,300 for a copy of the first issue of *Batman*! I bought it from the noted dealer Frack, and he will verify the sale."

On a slow news day, that would get on the teletype: *Pow! Biff! Ten-Cent Comic Book Brings Big Bucks!* If you collected comics between about 1965 and 1982, you

saw a story like this about every eight months. It appeared so often that some of us had trouble convincing non-fans that we were buying comics to read, not as investments.

Every time one of these appeared, every single person across the country who was thinking of selling the comic book in question raised his asking price. In this case, he might not jack it up to \$1,300 but you sure wouldn't be able to pick up any more at \$500.

Legend has it that Frick and Frack quickly sold their 10 for an average of \$1,100 apiece, which gave them a tidy profit. And, since so many copies of *Batman* #1 had actually been sold for that price, that became its new established value.

Did this ever happen? Probably — and, even if it didn't, the fact that folks thought it did meant that it was possible. We've certainly heard a lot of whispered, unverified reports of dealers manipulating more recent back-issue prices in any number of ways.

In politics, the illusion of power is power. If others think you have power, you do. In collectibles, the illusion of demand is demand. If dealers hear that fans are clamoring for more issues of *Fanboy* (spread the word, spread the word), they'll order more copies of *Fanboy* and — *voilà!* — demand!

What may be dangerous about *eBay* is the rapid dissemination of unfiltered data. If someone walks into a comics shop in Jerkwater, Ala., and pays thrice the going rate for *Millie the Model* #1, that's not likely to have an impact on prices across this great land of ours.

If the folks who assemble Overstreet or other price guides even hear about it, they'll write it off as a fluke. An abnormality. A not-likely-to-be-repeated-soon phenomenon. Any dealer with half a lick o' sense knows how to spot such aberrations and to not let them skew his sense of the marketplace.

But all over this year's Comic-Con International, one heard exchanges like this one:

**Potential Buyer:** "I'd like that book, but 30 bucks is way too high."

**Dealer:** "Hey, a copy of that went for \$38.75 on *eBay* last month. If you don't want it at \$30, I'll put it on *eBay* myself and get at least that much for it." One noted *eBay* transaction gets considered the new benchmark.

In other words, *eBay* is becoming the new price guide — or, at least, the daily Dow Jones between issuances of the traditional

price guides. If and when that atypical *Millie* collector overpays for his #1, they know about it all around the world. Instantly. This leaves the marketplace wide open for the cyberspace, high-tech version of the old Frick-and-Frack routine.

You and I could do it without leaving our respective computers. We could stock up on some old comic book that has yet to skyrocket in value. You put some copies up with a reserve price (a secret minimum) of, say, \$3,000. I open up a couple of *eBay* accounts under different handles — not difficult; one friend of mine has five — and I start bidding up to \$2,900 apiece for the books you're "selling."

Since no sale is consummated, you don't have to pay *eBay* a commission — just the reserve price insertion fee, which would be \$3 per listing. Somewhere out there, dealers will note that there's a lot of traffic in that comic book and that folks are bidding close to three grand each for them.

Might raise the "value" of the book, don't you think?

If it didn't — if we had to fake a few authentic sales — that wouldn't be costly, either. One of my handles could "buy" a copy from you for \$3,200. I wouldn't actually pay it to you, of course, but no one would know that. All it would cost is the fee to *eBay*, which would be under \$60. I can imagine that being quite cost-effective in hyping the prices of the comics we've stockpiled.

I doubt this would work in the long run, but it might in the short run. If a comic-book dealer has a copy of some issue on sale for \$10 and he hears that another dealer across town just sold one for \$100, don't you think the \$10 dealer is going to raise his price — at least for a while?

With *eBay* in the picture, every dealer in the world is "across town." More and more comics shops are looking to on-line auctions to help them move their backstock.

Last night, I spoke to a gent whose shop closed up a year or three ago, when he could no longer make that monthly nut. He had all his funds tied up in crates of old comics that were not being bought by the folks who chanced to wander through his doors. He is now, quite effectively, liquidating that inventory on *eBay*. He says he will soon be financially stable again, so I asked him if he was thinking of reopening his store.

"I'm selling on *eBay*," he answered. "Who needs a store?"

(Continues on Page 46)



# COMIC SHOP DIRECTORY

The following is a listing of comic shops across the country, arranged by state. Be sure to mention that you saw it in CBG!

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Send your listing with payment to: Comics Buyer's Guide  
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Check out all of the [awards](#) Mile High Comics has received.

## Point of View

From Page 44

(Well, maybe folks who want to buy current comics. Or companies that publish them and would like there to be places wherein they can be purchased...)

Recently, the *New York Times* quoted a report from some outfit named Forrester Research, which they described as a consulting company that tracks e-commerce. They said, "Spending on auction sites will grow from \$1 billion in 1998 to an estimated \$2.3 billion this year. While none of the auction sites knows how many people have turned electronic auctions into full-time jobs, eBay estimates that it has about 10,000 "power sellers," who sell merchandise for \$2,000 to \$25,000 or more each month."

Based on what I heard around the convention hall this year, it is easy to imagine the whole industry of selling old comics — as well as original art and certain other collectibles — going almost wholly on-line.

This concerns me for a couple of reasons. One is how prone to manipulation the marketplace may be. Another is the loss of more brick-'n'-mortar comics

shops, which can't be good for the industry of selling new comics.

Mostly, though, I just find on-line bartering to be a marketplace rife with instability. That's great, when I'm able to score some coveted trinket for low bucks. It's scary when you see all sorts of odd, aberrant sales — and I don't just mean someone paying \$2 too much for a book of *Groo* reprints.

A few months ago, an enterprising gent offered a couple of personally-signed-to-you photos of actress Traci Lords on eBay. He announced that he was soon to be meeting with her and she'd agreed to autograph a few pics for her fans. He was auctioning the chance to be one of those fans — to have Ms. Lords personally inscribe a pic to you, along with a Polaroid of her signing it as proof.

The top bidder paid more than \$1,700 for the honor — and there is no decimal point missing from that number: One thousand, seven hundred, and change. A few other takers got theirs for amounts ranging upwards of \$500 apiece.

None of these people, obviously, had done a Yahoo search for personal appearances of Ms. Lords. If they had, they'd have found out that she was then about to appear at the Hollywood Collectors Show in Los Angeles, which is like a

comic-book convention but with TV and movie stars instead of funnybook creators. There, Traci Lords was selling and signing photos for all comers at \$25 to \$30 each.

Call me cynical, but I have a hunch that's how the guy who was selling the photos planned on filling the orders.

Another example of the erratic nature of on-line auctioning: Back in 1975, DC issued a reprint of the first issue of *Batman*. Copies today go for well under \$50 and are easily distinguishable from the original book. The reissue was printed with pages almost twice the size of the genuine article and with an outer cover that stated clearly it was a facsimile.

On Aug. 17, a seller listed a copy of *Batman* #1 on eBay with an on-line photo and the following description:

Batman Comic Book, No. 1; Spring 1940 Issue. Detective Comics, Inc.; printed in USA. Slight curling of cover corners and slight discoloration or spotting on cover. Inner pages have age discoloration, but in very good condition. No tears on inner pages. A little wear on binding edge and only one tear on back cover at Robin's right thigh and one on lower edge. Overall in very good condition. Buyer to pay shipping and insurance. M.O. or cashiers checks get immediate shipping; personal checks allow 10 days to clear.

Twenty-four hours later, the peddler amended the offering. It was hard to tell

from the photo but someone had realized that this was the 1975 reprint, minus its outer cover, and had so informed him. By then, he'd received several bids in excess of \$1000 and it doubtlessly would have gone much higher.

Call me cynical again, but I suspect there's a lot of bizarre, uninformed buying going on — and that's never healthy.

A few years ago, the TV shopping networks were offering signed first issues of current comics for \$30-\$50. They sold thousands to shoppers who thought these were great investments.

I just saw one of these comic books sold on eBay for two bucks, postpaid. Some theorize that one of the things that has decimated current comics sales was all that feckless speculation — kids who got burned and now won't go near a comic book shop.

I don't know what effect on-line trading will have on collecting — or even on the market, such as it is, for the current product. But I do know it's changing things. That means there will be some effect —

— and somewhere, someone's gonna get hurt.

Mark Evanier gets his mail at PMB 303, 363 S. Fairfax Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90036-3124, and on the 'net at [me@evanier.com](#).

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## COMICS BUYER'S GUIDE

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**COMICS BUYER'S GUIDE**

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**ARTISTS NEEDED** for small press comics fanzine publications. No pay involved-just your work in print. Jim Main, 439 Chestnutland Rd., New Milford, CT 06776.

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**HUGE SELECTION** of Classic comics, illustrated, juniors; choice of grades, competitive prices, Strict and Accurate grading. Send \$1 for catalog. Bill Novick, 1708 Forest Hill Ave, S Milwaukee, WI 53172.

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**ORIGINALS: #74 VG, #81 VG, #82 VG/FN, #89 VG.** Lot \$66. Money Order. Information, write (no calls). R. Bowden, 1907 Texas, Rantoul, KS 66079-9037.

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**SELL! BABYLON 5**, 3-11, \$41.40. Nightwing 1-5, \$24.75. Starman 0-4, \$15. Plus S&H. Write to reserve: Don Hicks, 55 Yeatts Court, Martinsville, VA 24112.

**SUPERMAN #75**, Black Bag, 1st print, NM, unopened, \$5. Tom, 413-592-4537.

**30 DC** comics for \$25 ppd. None from my 25-50¢ list. Same offer for Malibu. Wally Stoelting, 5824 Winamac Lake Dr., 2-A, Mishawaka, IN 46545.

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**ADVENTURE COMICS** Adventures into the DC Universe, all American Men of War, All Star Comics, Animal Man, Aquaman for trade. Walter Coleman, Box 459, Regina, KY 41559.

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**SUPERMAN VS** Shazam tabloid (70s). Best of DC Digest #17 (Supergirl). Huge list of items for trade. John Pierce, 328 Powhatan, Columbia, OH 43204-1969. [jgpierce65@hotmail.com](mailto:jgpierce65@hotmail.com)

**WANTED: FLASH** (Silver Age) 112, 139, FN or better; Green Lantern/Sentinel-Heart of Darkness; Emerald Twilite GN; Hellblazer 55; Hot Wheels 5. Gerry 818-779-7643.

**LOOKING FOR** appearances by Degaton and his girl friend (?) Mechanique in DC Comics after Infinity Inc Annual #2. Will Day, PO Box 131, Eddington, ME 04428.

**WANTED! GREEN** Lantern/ Green Arrow Collection #4-6; Justice League (1970's) 110, 113, 115, 117, 119, 124, 125, 128, 133. Minx 3; Showcase 27, 34, 55 (VG/F); Starman 11. Gerry 818-779-7643.

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**MAVERICK, MONKEES**, Tarzan, Turok, Sugarfoot, WWWest, TOW Fargo, Wanted DOA, REBEL, Gunslinger, Bat Masterson, Davy Crockett, Deputy, Roy Rogers, Real McCoys, Zorro! Clifford, Box 113, Jonesboro, IL 62952.

**FOUR COLOR** 10, 11, 15, 17, 18, 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 34, 40, 43, 105, 107. John, 2417 Edgewood, Enid, OK 73703.

## 4151 DISNEY, WANTED

**WALT DISNEY** Digest #16 (Gold Key), Gladstone Comic album #23, Ducktales The Movie comic, White Fang (Disney). Karl Wilcox, 628 Morningside Dr., Chester, SC 29706.

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**LITTLE ANNIE** Fanny (1966, Vol. 1) oversized paperback. Nice condition. \$78 postpaid. Will consider trades for: (G/VG-FN) Millie, Tessie, Hedy, and pre-1960 Archies. Rick 916-568-7711. [richardp@statenet.com](mailto:richardp@statenet.com)

**LITTLE ANNIE** Fanny (1966, Vol. 1) oversized paperback. Nice condition. \$78 postpaid. Will consider trades for: (G/VG-FN) Millie, Tessie, Hedy, and pre-1960 Archies. Rick 916-568-7711. [richardp@statenet.com](mailto:richardp@statenet.com)

## 4161 EC, WANTED

**STILL LOOKING** for Mad. Buy or trade. John Snyder, 120 E. Franklin St., Hamilton, NJ 08610. e-mail: [madzombi@gateway.net](mailto:madzombi@gateway.net)

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**CAPTAIN MARVEL** vs Mr. Mind, 25 chapter serial color H/C reprint F/M, \$110. Shazam 40/70s HC F/NM, \$35. Ernie 603-447-5701. [Yelir3@aol.com](mailto:Yelir3@aol.com)

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**WEIRD WESTERN** #13 VF \$15, Sept. 1972. Send want lists. 716-675-8469. Ray Olivier, 33 Highland Ave., West Seneca, NY 14224-2826.

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**BOB COLT** #2, Fine, \$55, postpaid. Paul Hudson, #18 Alfresco Dr., Ballwin, MO 63021. 636-391-8916.

**TOM MIX**, 8/G-VG, 11/G+, 12/G+, 15/VG, \$45, postpaid. Paul Hudson, #18 Alfresco Dr., Ballwin, MO 63021. 636-391-8916.

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**JOHN WAYNE**, Bob Steele, Smiley Burnette, Whip Wilson, Roy Rogers, Gene Autry, Buck Jones, Gabby Hayes, others. William Giles, Box 271, Keithville, LA 71047. 318-925-6654.

**WANTED: WESTERN** Gun Fighters, Vol. #11-12. Peter Garcia, Box 711 Road #130, Hatillo, PR 00659.

**ATLAS BLACK** Rider #18, #21, #29, #31, FR-GD, 50% 29th Guide. Two Gun Kid #11, #12, Fair/Good, 50%. Kermit Harris, New Creek, WV 26743.

**GENE AUTRY**, Roy Rogers & Lone Ranger, others. Paying 50% of 29th Edition of Overstreet Guide. Silvestri, 13550 Del Monte Dr., Seal Beach, CA 90740. mrcomics@aol.com

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**CRIME FIGHTING** Detective #14 VG- \$25, Justice Traps The Guilty #22, VG+ \$15. Underworld Crime #2 GD++ \$20. J.Loew, 3762 W. 11th Ave, Suite 127, Eugene, OR 97402.

**BLACK TERROR** #13 G+ \$40, Black Terror #14 F- \$80, Black Terror 18 G+ \$40, Black Terror 19 G+ \$40. Roland 713-864-6649.

**EARLY GOLDEN** Age, 50% discounted. Early Silver, 1960s 20% discounted. SASE to: Leo Popeski, 745 Dutch Ln. #70, Hermitage, PA 16148.

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**DON WINSLOW** 26 F/VF, 36 F/VF, 38 F/VF @ \$27.50; 46 F, 48 F, 49 F @ \$20; 50 VG, 52 VG @ \$12.50. Donald Puff, 716-834-0996.

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**ACTION COMICS** #204 VG/F \$95, #222 VG \$60, #236 VG/F \$80, #260 Fine \$45, #262 VG \$22. Many references. Shaun Clancy, 425-481-6239, mclancy961@aol.com

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**COVERLESS ACTION** #123, Superman #92, Boy #20- \$25 for the lot. Joe Borbas, 126 Bentley Ave., Mercerville, NJ 08619. 609-890-6877. jborbas@oit.state.nj.us.

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**GIANT BATMAN Annual #5, VG+, \$35;** eighty-page Giant #2, G+, \$25. Our Army at War #100, VG+, \$35 plus \$4 postage. Jonathan Loew, 3762 W. 11th Ave. Suite 127, Eugene, OR 97402.

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**COOPER SKEBER:** Unauthorized Marvel Parody mentioned in Wizard #79, page 30. Anyone have a copy? Matt Biswell, 1626 Rossi St., Boise, ID 83706-3354 or [torgoo@hotmail.com](mailto:torgoo@hotmail.com)

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**BREYFOGLE BATMAN** art for sale. Send SASE to: Richard Baldwin, PO Box 480815, Los Angeles, CA 90048 for catalog.

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**JOE ORLANDO** art; 40 years old. Tale of 2 cities, pgs 6, 7, 22, \$46; \$65, postpaid. Davis, 34 Lexington, Pitman, NJ 08071. 856-589-1233.

**PAUL GULACY:** Batman artwork; L.O.T.D.K.#122 & S.O.T.B.#90; Star Wars-Crimson Empire II issues #186; Spider-Man art from Amazing and Web; Bagley, Larsen, Butler & more! Ghost artwork: issues #12-36; Ka-Zar #13 art; Quicksilver #7&9 art. 503-645-6026.

**GARY LEACH** Pressbotten cover #2 Nico Pico \$325. Paul Kirchner Dope Rider from High Times 2-pg. story \$300. PG. Color \$150. Lee Roy 212-741-2593, phone/ fax.

**JETSONS #7** cover 007 Jetson \$55. Flintstones #6 Splash Whole Gang \$45. Alvin #11 1960s Splash all chipmunks, Dave \$80, pg. 22 2/3 Splash \$90. Longenbach 212-741-2593, phone/ fax.

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**SAN DIEGO** Comic-Con Programs 1977-83, 1985-86, 1988-89, 1995-97. Contact Gary Grossmann, 8916 Blomberg St. SW, Olympia, WA 98512. 360-352-0432. E-mail: grossfam@olywa.net

**NABISCO SHREDDED** Wheat cereal box promotion 1950s, Straight Arrow's Injun-Newties, dealing with nature survival, preserving environment, camping. Seeking original copies, compilations. Cliff 303-424-8762. seagem@mstg.net

**"ANIME" LASERDISC:** new, used, dubbed and subtitled. Also VHS and DVD. Send lists. Condition, price, etc. Samuel Joyner, RR#3 Box #257-B, Tarboro, NC 27886.

**WANTED ANY** Buckaroo Bananza items, especially comics, Bucks posters, etc. Already have View-Master set. Call Ric at 860-276-8158.

**HOW ABOUT** Trading 10 of your promo cards for 10 of mine. Would like to buy Dobro Guitar. Tom Vanko, 1527 Somerset Dr., Munster, IN 46321.

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**ANIME PLAYGROUND.** Anime Entertainment site and collectible store. We carry a variety animation collectible toys, including Japanese Pokemon toys. We also feature video game reviews, art and Idol image galleries as well. Mention this ad for 10% your first order. Check us out on the Web at <http://www.animeplayground.com>

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**NIGHTMARE BEFORE** Christmas watches, bats and cats, Hallowentown, pumpkins, Christmastown. In original boxes. \$9 each, postage \$3. Dave Zustiak, 2268 Gall Avenue, Maplewood, MN 55109.

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**POWERPUFF GIRLS**, Dexters Lab items information, would like to hear from fans of these cartoons. Write: Charles Kline, PO Box 791, Cleveland, MS 38732-0791.

**PLASTIC MILITARY** model kits from 50s, 60s. Monogram, Aurora, Revell. Must be complete, unbuild, in VF condition boxes. Buy/trade for comics. 718-979-4043. jboardman@aol.com

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## 4720

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## FANZINES, FOR SALE

**YELLOWBACK LIBRARY** is a monthly magazine for series book collectors. Sample copy, \$3. Box 36172, Des Moines, IA 50315.

**COMICS ZINES** 1960s, 1970s, RBCC, Long Tom's Americana Comics, G.A. reprints. Send SASE for list. James Van Hise, 57754 Onaga Trail, Yucca Valley, CA 92284.

**COMIC READER** 94, 95, 100, 103-105, 118, 127, 133, 136, 141, 166, 170-181, more. \$4 each. Steve Kolanjian, 2068 E. 8th, Brooklyn, NY 11223-4129. 718-376-1245.

## 4801

## FANZINES, WANTED

**CONTEMPORARY PICTORIAL** Literature (CPL) #6 & #7 wanted. Early 70s fanzine. Dave, 12 Eliot Dr., Vernon, CT 06066.

**WANTED: ANY** condition, 1970's Fanzine by Mark Gruenwald: Omniverse #2. (Also need free computers!) E-mail: lymond@peaknet.net. Write: Zanvil, 228-G Freedom Drive, Belleville, IL 62226.

**SPA FON** #3 & #4 wanted. e-mail: alored0@webmail.bellsouth.net

## 4801

## FANZINES, WANTED

**THE JASOOMIAN** wanted: #11 Oct. 1973, an ERB Fanzine. Chris Rumsey, PO Box 114, Bessie, OK 73622.

**COMICS JOURNAL** #49. Rodney Schroeter, Box 370528, Milwaukee, WI 53237-1628. sreels@execpc.com Also: Comic Crusader #4.

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**SPIRIT WEEKLY** Sundies VG/F 12/8/40 \$20; 8/24/41, 10/12/41, 6/28/42 \$15 each. Priority mail, insured \$4. Inquire 716-882-2875. Donald Whyte, 46 Greenwood Pl., Buffalo, NY 14213.

## 4901

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**WANTED: GASOLINE** Alley half tabs 1990 to present. rogerclark@volcano.net

**WANTED: DONNESBURY** half tabs 1993 through present. rogerclark@volcano.net

**SUPERMAN AND Batman** Sundays and dailies wanted. David Barsaloud, 12 Marion St., Chicopee, MA 01013. E-mail: barsaloud@sps.springfield.ma.us



By Maggie Thompson

**Brainbomb** (August 99, Behemoth Books, 21 Valley Park Ct., Damascus, MD 20872, \$19.95) is a black-and-white trade-paperback anthology aimed at school kids. The idea is to inspire them by demonstrating the pleasures of comics as a means of expression and entertainment. Publisher and Project Manager Brian Clopper provides an introduction to the characters in each story, provides a biography (and address) of the creator, and then prints each story.

It's an incredible first effort — and it's also a terrific guide to a number of creators (complete with addresses and self-portraits). It's also a wonderful first step to a teaching tool for the next generation of creators. It may be that Clopper will develop the concept even further, changing a few approaches. These could come in later editions of this or in a future Clopper collection.

- In these times, a title which includes the word "bomb" may excite young readers but turn off some educators.

- Occasional poop and piddle gags, not to mention violent scenes with an assortment of villains, may excite young readers but turn off some educators.

- Comments aimed at teachers may give educators great ideas but turn off some young readers.

- Teachers may not be thrilled at the book's many ads for other publications.

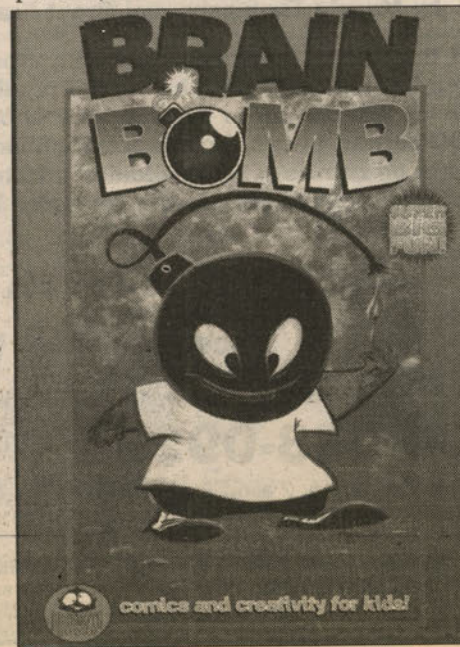
- There's still fine-tuning to be done editorially. Whoever entered the text material is still typing as though using a typewriter. (In typesetting, even on computers, single spaces go after periods. Using italics or boldface would work much better for design than the all-capital-letters adopted for titles and characters. And directional apostrophes would also make for better design.) A book designed to educate could also use another proof-reader ("the blender gets ahold of them," "I appreciate the complement").

And: Introductions to stories shouldn't give away their endings, as is the case with Kirsten Petersen's story. Someone should have asked that creators who wanted to do stories in rhyme should actually make the text rhyme ("Back in the world that Captain Happy escaped/ A villain found him and wants to devastate").

However, the fine-tunings need to be done because the book is so good that it should be kept in print for ongoing availability to its audience. The price may seem high, but it's for 288 black-and-white pages and a four-color laminated cover. And the work on display is from more than 25 creators — and on white paper good enough to cry out for crayoning.

Jon "Bean" Hastings' section (on how to make grotesque faces), for example, should go over well with grownups and kids, without offending either group. Matt Vander Pol's allegory could lead to the realization that comic books can work exceptionally well for such material. Indeed, bright spots are everywhere. Captain Mighty, for example, has trouble driving his Invisomobile, because he can't locate his invisible car keys.

The indicia calls this "Volume One." It is to be hoped that Clopper is planning many more — perhaps an entire library of fun comics collections to entrance kids, parents, and teachers.



**[Editor's Note: Items for this feature, which lists appearances in comics stores and lecture halls — not conventions — of writers, artists, and editors should be submitted as far in advance as possible. We need your information at least two weeks in advance of the signing to have a sporting chance of getting it in.]**

The notices must be written — we cannot take these by telephone — and kept brief, preferably in the format used here. Send to **Now Appearing**, c/o Comics Buyer's Guide, 700 E. State St., Iola, Wis. 54990 or fax it (again c/o CBG) to (715) 445-4087.

Please note: This is a free service.]

October 8-10

**Tony DiGerolamo** (*Jersey Devil* #10) at 7th Annual Nesco Volunteer Co. Haunted House and Hayride, Rt. 542, Nesco, New Jersey, from 7 to 11 p.m. Oct. 8 and 9 and 7 to 10 p.m. Oct. 10.

October 9

**Roger Stern** (writer of *Incredible Hulk vs. Superman*) at Moravian Book Shop, 428 Main St., Bethlehem, Pennsylvania from 1 to 4 p.m.

October 14

**Barry Windsor-Smith** (*Barry Windsor-Smith: Opus Vol. 1*) at Barnes & Noble, 380 Walt Whitman Rd., Huntington Station, Long Island, New York, beginning at 7:30 p.m.

October 15

**Tony DiGerolamo, Brian Fraim, and Brendon Fraim** (creative team on *Jersey Devil* #10) at Tower Books, South Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania,

from 7 to 10 p.m.

October 16

**Ted Raimi** (*Xena's "Joxer"*) at Metro Entertainment, 6 W. Anapamu, Santa Barbara, California 93101, beginning at 1 p.m.

**Jeff Limke** (writer of *Legends of Camelot: Merlin*) and **Jason Sandberg** (writer/artist of *Jupiter*) at The Mind's Eye Comics, 1565 Cliff Rd., Suite #6, Eagan, Minnesota from 4 to 8 p.m.

October 21

**Ellen Forney** (creator of *Monkey Food: The Complete "I Was Seven in '75" Collection*) at Bailey/Coy Books, 414 Broadway East, Seattle, Washington, beginning at 7 p.m.

October 21-23

**Tony DiGerolamo** (*Jersey Devil* #10) at Jason's Lair: Annual Lost Boys of Cub Scout Pack 65, Exit 9 on the Garden State Parkway, Cape May Courthouse, New Jersey from 7 to 11 p.m.

October 24

**Tony DiGerolamo** (*Jersey Devil* #10) at The Jersey Devil Haunted Woods, Williamstown, New Jersey, from 7 to 10 p.m.

October 25

**Ellen Forney** (creator of *Monkey Food: The Complete "I Was Seven in '75" Collection*) at Powell's Books on Hawthorne, 3723 SE Hawthorne Blvd., Portland, Oregon, beginning at 7:30 p.m.

October 27

**Ellen Forney** (creator of *Monkey Food: The Complete "I Was Seven in '75" Collection*) at Barnes & Noble, 2352 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, California, beginning at 7:30 p.m.

**Barry Windsor-Smith** (*Barry Windsor-Smith: Opus Vol. 1*) at Barnes & Noble, Boston University, 660 Beacon St., Boston, Massachusetts beginning at 7 p.m.

October 28-30

**Tony DiGerolamo** (*Jersey Devil* #10) at Lower Alloways Creek Haunted Hayride and Barn, near Salem, New Jersey from 7 to 11 p.m.

October 29

**Barry Windsor-Smith** (*Barry Windsor-Smith: Opus Vol. 1*) at Barnes & Noble, 495 South Rd. (Rt. 9), Poughkeepsie, New York beginning at 7 p.m.







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| <input type="checkbox"/> CORPORATION                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <input type="checkbox"/> LIMITED PARTNERSHIP   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CO PARTNERSHIP                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <input type="checkbox"/> INDIVIDUAL PROPRIETOR |
| NO. OF YEARS ESTABLISHED _____                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                |
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| Further, I (we), the undersigned, will be held personally responsible and promise to pay promptly within 15 days of the billing date for all advertising debts incurred by the above named business and owing to Krause Publications.                                                                                                                                             |                                                |
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## Advertising Deadlines

| AD DEADLINE         | NO.  | ISSUE         | AD DEADLINE         | NO.  | ISSUE         |
|---------------------|------|---------------|---------------------|------|---------------|
| Tues. Oct. 5, 1999  | 1354 | Oct. 29, 1999 | Tues. Oct. 26, 1999 | 1357 | Nov. 19, 1999 |
| Tues. Oct. 12, 1999 | 1355 | Nov. 5, 1999  | Tues. Nov. 2, 1999  | 1358 | Nov. 26, 1999 |
| Tues. Oct. 19, 1999 | 1356 | Nov. 12, 1999 | Tues. Nov. 9, 1999  | 1359 | Dec. 3, 1999  |

## DISPLAY ADVERTISING

(Cost per ad per issue: ads must run consecutively to earn contract discounts.)

| AD SIZE                                                                                     | ISSUE | ISSUES | ISSUES | ISSUES | ISSUES |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| <b>A. Eighth Page</b><br>(4-1/8" x 2-3/8")                                                  | \$103 | \$101  | \$99   | \$95   | \$87   |
| <b>B. Quarter Page Vertical</b><br>(4-1/8" x 5-3/8")                                        | \$195 | \$192  | \$188  | \$180  | \$164  |
| Quarter Page Horizontal<br>(10" x 2-3/8")                                                   | \$195 | \$192  | \$188  | \$180  | \$164  |
| <b>C. Half Page Vertical</b><br>(4-1/8" x 11") or<br>Half Page Horizontal<br>(10" x 5-3/8") | \$303 | \$297  | \$291  | \$279  | \$255  |
| <b>D. Full Page</b><br>(10" x 11")                                                          | \$546 | \$536  | \$525  | \$503  | \$459  |

## CLASSIFIED DISPLAY

(Cost per ad per issue: ads must run consecutively to earn contract discounts.)

| AD SIZE                                 | ISSUE   | ISSUES  | ISSUES  | ISSUES  | ISSUES  |
|-----------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| <b>1. One Inch</b><br>(2-1/4" x 1")     | \$22.00 | \$21.00 | \$20.00 | \$19.00 | \$18.00 |
| <b>2. Two Inches</b><br>(2-1/4" x 2")   | \$31.00 | \$30.00 | \$29.00 | \$28.00 | \$26.00 |
| <b>3. Three Inches</b><br>(2-1/4" x 3") | \$39.00 | \$38.00 | \$37.00 | \$36.00 | \$33.00 |

## CLASSIFIED WORD ADS:

Our "Classified" ads are heavily read. Base rates are 40¢ per word with discounts for multiple issues. Please print and punctuate - we are not responsible for error due to long-hand and illegible copy. For more information see classified ad form in the classified section. Credit card customers can place word ads TOLL FREE - Call 1-800-942-0673. (This is for classified word ads only.)

## UNIT ADVERTISING:

### A. COLLECTORS SHOWCASE

Collectors Showcase Units are 3-1/4" wide x 1-5/8" high and can be bought in multiples. All typesetting is done by Krause Publications and is included in the price.

(Cost per ad per issue: ads must run consecutively to earn contract discounts.)

| 1 Issue | 6 Issues | 13 Issues | 26 Issues | 52 Issues |
|---------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| \$31.00 | \$30.00  | \$29.00   | \$28.00   | \$26.00   |

### B. COMICS TRADER ADS

"No-frills" advertising with a price to match. Design your own ad - just type your ad clearly on an 8-1/2" w x 8-1/2" h sheet of paper. We will reduce your Trader ad to fit a 1/9 page space (3-1/4" w x 3-1/4" h). Super Traders should be typed on an 8-1/2" w x 8-1/2" h sheet of paper which will be reduced to fit a 5" x 5" space.

#### Regular Trader

(Cost per ad per issue: ads must run consecutively to earn contract discounts. Limit 6 Trader spaces per page per advertiser.)

| 1 Issue | 6 Issues | 13 Issues | 26 Issues | 52 Issues |
|---------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| \$43.00 | \$42.00  | \$41.00   | \$40.00   | \$36.00   |

#### Super Trader

(Cost per ad per issue: ads must run consecutively to earn contract discounts. Limit 2 Super Trader spaces per advertiser per page.)

| 1 Issue  | 6 Issues | 13 Issues | 26 Issues | 52 Issues |
|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| \$114.00 | \$112.00 | \$110.00  | \$105.00  | \$96.00   |

### C. RETAILER DIRECTORY ..... \$3.50 per issue

Leads fans to your cash register! List your store name, address, phone number and 15 words of description. Sold in 26 and 52 week increments. It's targeted more to the comics buff than the yellow pages - and it's more cost effective. If you sell COMICS BUYER'S GUIDE in your store, we will publish your listing in bold face type at no extra charge.





Shana really, really wanted to go to the Tori Amos concert. But it was an extremely small venue, and tickets were going to be impossible to come by. However, I figured I had one shot at accommodating her: Tori Amos, as everyone knows, is tight with Neil Gaiman. And, in the best spirit of six degrees of separation, I know Neil and, therefore, had (albeit limited) access to Amos.



**"If we ever do a second collection (one of the most-asked questions I get), then Neil is certainly welcome to do that cover."**



So I called Neil and asked him if there was any way he could score a couple of tickets to the Tori Amos concert (apparently narrowly beating a deluge of other people asking him very much the same thing). Neil said that he would see what he could do. And several days later, Neil called me and told me that he had, indeed, managed to make calls and it had been arranged that Shana would be able to attend the sold-out concert.

"Neil, I really owe you," I said.

And there was a pause at the other end of the line.

And then Neil said, very slowly, very deliberately, "Yes. I know."

It was the single most terrifying, most sinister enunciation of those three relatively harmless words that I had ever heard.

Somewhere inside me, my soul screamed in fear. What had I gotten us into? Just to give my daughter some temporary happiness — what unholy bargain had I unwittingly opened myself to? When Neil, at some point in the future, wanted to cash in that chip — what would the hideous price be? Whom would I have to hurt? To kill? Or would it simply be that, many years hence (hopefully), I would be lying on my deathbed, a long-forgotten writer whom some people once considered vaguely important long ago, and suddenly, at the bedside, Neil would appear in a burst of smoke, looking much the same as he does now. "Time for payback," he would say, and he'd remove the sunglasses and there would be no eyes there, just twin sets of little jagged teeth ...

Well ...

**Other belated Neil recollections** (belated since the Neil theme issue was a few issues back, but what the heck).

At a convention a few years back, Neil signed a book to me and he rendered in it a very nice, detailed ink sketch of Sandman. And

I looked at it and realized that this guy could really draw, conveying remarkable detail with just a few meticulously rendered lines. It was at that point that Krause was publishing the first *But I Digress* trade paperback collection, and we hadn't settled yet on who would do the cover. I knew that I wanted to get someone unusual, someone unexpected, and, as soon as I saw Neil's sketch in the book, I decided he was the guy. I approached him about the notion of doing the cover for the paperback. He seemed startled by the notion, and I assured him that he would have complete freedom to do whatever he wanted. "OK," he said after giving it some consideration.

We then made a point of not announcing who was going to be doing the cover, thereby creating a minor mystery and a good degree of speculation. All we said was, "The cover will be by someone who's very well-known but the last artist you'd expect to see." Naturally, fans figured that it was Rob Liefeld, Todd McFarlane, or assorted other folks who held me in tremendous esteem (sh'right).

At another convention, I approached John Byrne about the prospect of his doing the back cover. John said, "Only if I know who's going to be doing the front cover. I want to know who I'm following." The subtext of his statement wasn't very sub, and I could understand his sentiments. He'd been as openly dissed by certain artists as I had been, and he didn't want to run "second fiddle" to one of them. "Fair enough, I'll tell you — but word of honor, you keep it to yourself." He nodded. "Neil Gaiman," I said. His eyebrows knit, he considered it a moment, and then said, "OK. I can live with that."

**Then I get the cover from Neil.** I'm flabbergasted. It's this rendering of me as Moses, descending from the mount with the Ten Commandments. At the bottom of the mount is gathered a group of rabid worshippers (also visible are a clearly less-than-worshipful Neil, as well as a little mouse dressed as Dream). The first words I uttered were "Oh my God." They were also the second and third things. I thought, How the hell could I go with this? Everyone's gonna think I came up with the idea, and I'm going to come across as the most pretentious jerk in the world. Maybe I should just tell Neil we can't use it and apologize profusely.

But then I considered three things: First, I had indeed told Neil that he had total freedom to do what he wanted. How could I

consider myself a supporter of free expression and then stifle it on the cover of my own work? Second, it was probably balanced to some degree by the cover on the back cover art, which depicted a cackling John Byrne feeding copies of my column into a paper shredder. And finally, it may very well be that people who read the column regularly have already come to the conclusion that I'm the most pretentious jerk in the world, so where was the damage being done, really?

So that's the cover that adorns the collection. And it all worked out, and just to show what a jerk I am, if we ever do a second collection (one of the most-asked questions I get) then Neil is certainly welcome to do that cover. Because, y'know — I just don't learn.

**When Neil's marvelous limited TV series, *Neverwhere* began,** Neil offered to send me a copy of the series on tape. So the tapes arrived, and I popped the first one in.

The story started, and it appeared to be set in a courtroom of some sort. The British actors impressed me, because they seemed to have completely mastered American accents. The thing is, what little I knew of *Neverwhere* told me that it was set in sort of an underworld somehow linked with the London underground, so I wasn't sure what this trial sequence had to do with anything. But you know what? I had faith in Neil. I mean, sure, the more that I watched, the less sense it seemed to make. The dialogue was not what I was expecting from Neil. It seemed stilted, tortured. But then I figured, he's doing it on purpose. He's going for some type of effect. And there was a woman judge who seemed to be pontificating on what the supplicants were telling her.

The show wore on. I began to get bored. Whatever it was that Neil was trying to express about the American judicial system, I was missing it. I tried speed searching past the scene, hoping the next one would be more interesting. But it was no use. When I punched the tape back on, we were still in the courtroom. Still boring people, still stilted dialogue.

"My God, Neil's lost his mind," I said. "How am I going to tell him that this show is just awful? How can I ..."

Then suddenly I heard an announcer say, "We'll be back with *Judge Judy* right after this." And the logo appeared for a TV station in Seattle. "Judge who?" I wondered. Suddenly, there were TV commercials, and I finally figured

it out. Neil looked pained when I described it to him.

**Once, at the Chicago Comic-con** where Harlan Ellison was the guest of honor, Neil flew in as a surprise. We were doing a "Friends of Harlan" panel and, while on the panel, I started making snide remarks about Neil (much to the clear puzzlement of the audience). And, while I was in the midst of dissing him, Neil walked in and stood behind me. Audience went nuts.

I've always been impressed by Neil for any number of reasons. His selfless dedication to the CBLDF, for one, and his numerous money-raising readings. His apparently boundless talent. Those nifty shades. But one of the things I remember most vividly was at a convention, when DC had black-and-white photocopies of *Sandman* #50 out. While at the convention, Neil asked me if I'd happened to read the display copy. "Yup," I said. And to my surprise, he asked me eagerly, "What did you think?"

I was, frankly, stunned. I'm not sure how to put this without sounding either disingenuous or pompous, but — I couldn't believe he cared what I thought. I mean, I don't think I produce garbage (not intentionally, in any event) but I'm simply not at Neil's level. I know that. Doesn't bother me. Gives me something to aspire to. And then I realized that one of the things that make Neil great is that, despite all his accomplishments and accolades, he hasn't let it get to him. He has as much insecurity about his work as any novice might have, still has that need to have people tell him, "Good job."

It's kind of like the year Billy Crystal was absolutely killing 'em at the Oscars. The audience was roaring — yet, during commercial breaks, Crystal reportedly kept running around to everyone — prop people, grips, whoever — and saying, "How am I doing?" And you'd wonder how he could possibly wonder such a thing.

I think all truly great writers need that insecurity to remain great, because, once they become too smug, too confident in their abilities, that's when the creative rot starts to set in. I don't foresee that happening with Neil any time in the near future.

Which won't stop me from shuddering in dread fear of Neil calling in the favor.

Hit him up for Tori Amos tickets at your own risk.

Peter David, writer of stuff, can be written to at *To Be Continued Inc.*, P.O. Box 239, Bayport, NY 11705.



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# PREVIEWS Exclusive

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### MARVEL HISTORY FIRST APPEARANCES FIGURES

A Previews Exclusive! Comic Stores Only! Discover the next generation of super-heroes with these "Marvel History" action figures, all taken from Marvel's MC2 imprint! Choose from: *American Dream*, *Spider-Girl*, *Stinger*, and *Wild Thing* — and discover for yourself the true meaning of "Girl Power!" Each figure stands ready at 5" tall, is highly detailed, includes various accessories, serious articulation, and features all-new MC2 first Appearance-themed blister card packaging!



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### SPECIALTY MARKET EXCLUSIVES



### OVER RACE GUILLOTINNA FIGURE

Imported from Japan! Designed by Yasushi Nirasawa and sculpted by Shimitsu Usui. Yasushi Nirasawa's character from *Guillotinna* still can't cool down her madness even after she fished up her enemy Danken! Standing 20cm tall, she comes with two different kinds of weapons for both hands and diorama base. Blister card packaging.

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So realistic, you'll think you're in the movie! This 1:5 scale figure of the original Alien comes fully-painted and fully-assembled, complete with his see-through skull. This is a re-cast of Tsukuda's Alien figure offered during the '80s, but with superior paint detailing. Get him, before he gets you! Window box packaging.

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175<sup>00</sup>/300<sup>00</sup>

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### PREVIEWS SHARED EXCLUSIVES

### JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA 12-INCH AQUAMAN FIGURES

A Previews Shared Exclusive with KB Toys! This all-new 12" tall figure brings DC's King of the Seas to life, complete with molded beard and long hair, and hook! This figure is 100% new, with no "farmed" pieces! An amazing addition to your 12" JLA figure collection! Window box packaging.

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- Xena Magazine Featuring Hercules #4 Exclusive Variant Cover
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